MĪN KAṆ

THE MYSTICAL MEANING OF POSSESSING 'FISH-EYES'

BY

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MĪN KAṆ

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JÑĀNA MĀLĀ

I

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THE MYSTICAL MEANING OF POSSESSING 'FISH-EYES'

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PREAMBLE

The full explanation of one of the inscriptions of the Indus Valley has given us the opportunity for undertaking this study in comparative philosophical and religious thought; and while making it we have been led by two principles. First, that the human mind was created by God for the enjoyment of truth, and that whosoever is sincere, dispassionate and unprejudiced is bound to find and enjoy it; and second, that the human soul, created to God's image and likeness, is always illumined by the Word of God, according to what St. John said: "There is one who enlightens every soul born into the word"[1]; for man is, in the whole material creation, the brightest reverberation of that uncreated Light: *imaṁ lokamabhyārcat puruṣarūpeṇa.*[2]

In the course of our study we have come across Indian terms and expressions which have been interpreted differently by different schools and very rarely in the light of objective truth. While comparing them with similar Christian terms and expressions, we have tried to stabilize their meaning according to the latter standard. It would, so we understand, be a great boon for Indian philosophy if such stabilization is finally accepted for the proper and universal understanding of her matchless philosophical method.

Our main inspirer while carrying out our task has been Pope Leo XIII, who in his encyclical *Æterni Patris,* of 4th August 1879, after stating that there are a number of truths that have also been known to non-Christian sages, exhorts all "to make use of them for the benefit and advantage of the revealed doctrine, so that it would be made clear that human wisdom and even the testimony of our adversaries is in agreement with the

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[1] *John,* I, 9.

[2] *Aitareya Āraṇyaka,* II, 2, 1.

Christian faith."[3] "That voice", says the Most Rev. Leo P. Kierkels, C. P., Apostolic Delegate of India, "is neither of the East nor of the West; it is the voice of the Spirit, independent of climes, nowhere alien any more than the voice of science and truth, although as on the day of Pentecost,[4] it is meant to be heard by each in the tongue wherein he was born."[5] The proper contrast and comparison of all these truths will be advantageous to both sides, for truth is always helpful and loosens the bonds of our mind: "Truth will set you free."[6]

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[3] *Acts de Léon XIII*, I, p. 46.

[4] *Acts*, II, 8.

[5] Kierkels, Reply to the Address of the Madras Municipal Corporation on the occasion of the National Eucharistic Congress, *Report of the Congress*, p. 43.

[6] *John*, VIII, 32.

TO

THE SACRED MEMORY

OF

REV. FR. ROBERTO DE NOBILI, S. J.

A PIONEER SANSKRIT AND TAMIL SCHOLAR

OF SOUTH INDIA

WHO

OWING TO HIS HIGH PHILOSOPHICAL TALENTS

PROFOUND *JÑĀNA* OF THE ANCIENT INDIAN LORE

AND EMINENT *SANNYĀSA*

WAS STYLED BY HIS CONTEMPORARIES

TATTVA PŌTAKAR

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INTRODUCTION

In one of the inscriptions of Mohenjo Daro, which I have published and commented upon several times[1], we discover an interesting ideal of the spiritual life of man. The inscription reads: *Vaṇ tēr ōr mīn kaṇ vāḻ;* which means: "Let the one having fish-eyes, on reaching the sky, be happy." The epigraph refers to a man who has died (such is the meaning of the expression 'reaching the sky'). This man who has died seems to have been endowed with the extraordinary quality of having 'fish-eyes', and this quality seems to be the foundation of his future happiness in the other life. What is the meaning of this puzzling expression?

According to the ideas of that period, God has fish-eyes. He is *mīnkaṇ*, *par excellence*, a name which is equivalent to *viḍukaṇ*, 'the one whose eyes are always open'.[2] Fishes have no eye-lids, accordingly they cannot shut their eyes; their eyes are always open. This was well known to ancient Indians. When the twelve years of exile of the Pāṇḍavas were coming to a close, Yudhiṣṭhira once, on approaching a pond, heard a voice which first declared itself to be the voice of a Yakṣa, but which finally was revealed to be that of Dharma. The voice asked him: "What sleepeth with open eyes?" And

[1] Cf. Heras, "The Religion of the Mohenjo Daro People according to the Inscriptions", *Journal of the University of Bombay*, V (1936), p. 28; Heras, "The Origin of Indian Philosophy and Asceticism", in Karmarkar-Kalandani, *The Mystic Teachings of the Haridāsas of Karnāṭaka*, p. XLI; Heras, "The Tree of Life," *The New Review*, XIX, pp. 380—384; Heras, "La Tradición del pecado del Paraíso en las naciones protoíndicomediterráneas", *Estudios Bíblicos* (Madrid), I (1941), pp. 71—74.

[2] Cf. Heras, "The Religion of the Mohenjo Daro People", *op. cit.*, pp. 10–11. In the inscription under study *mīnkaṇ* cannot refer to God, for this *mīnkaṇ* has reached the sky, and God cannot reach the sky, for He is in it. According to them God is *Iruvan*, 'the One who is', self existent; therefore He cannot die.

Yudhiṣṭhira wisely replied: "A fish doth sleep with open eyes."[3] One whose eyes are always open, sees everything. To say, therefore of God that He has 'fish-eyes' is equivalent to saying that He sees everything, that He is omniscient. Is this what is meant by this expression when applied to a man? Evidently not, for man can never take everything in with his eyes; that is physically impossible. For a man to have 'fish-eyes' means to possess the eyes of God, *i.e.* to see the things of the world as God sees them, and to appreciate them as He appreciates them.

This is the same as to say that a man has 'fish-eyes' if he is wise, nor does he allow himself to be deceived by the things that surround him. The sages of the Upaniṣadic period were only the continuators of this idea when they stated so emphatically that *jñāna-mārga* was the only way to attain to salvation.[4] Wisdom in fact is the greatest object which a man may aspire to. "If wisdom shall enter into thy heart," we read in the book of *Proverbs* of Solomon, "and knowledge please thy soul, counsel shall keep thee, and prudence shall preserve thee, that thou mayest be delivered from the evil way, and from the man that speaketh perverse things."[5] "Wisdom", in fact, "is better than strength, and a wise man is better than a strong man."[6] This is the wisdom that was coveted by a devoted soul who exclaimed: "I wish I could see everything as it is, and to weigh everything in the just scale of truth! Then I would love everything according to its worth: the eternal things as eternal, and the temporal ones as temporal; the vain ones as vain, and the solid and true ones as such."[7]

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[3] *Mahābhārata*, Āraṇyaka Parva, 17349—17350.

[4] Very often in Indian Philosophy, for instance, *Bṛhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad*, VI, 2, 15; *Cāndogya Upaniṣad*, IV, 15, 4-6; V, 10, 13; *Bhagavad Gītā*, XII, 12.

[5] *Prov.*, II, 10—12.

[6] *Wisd.*, VI, 1.

[7] Salazar, *Affectos e Consideraçoens Devotas*, p. 103.

No other doctrine was the doctrine of the Buddha when he stated that all the miseries of the world come from ignorance, but expressed in the opposite way[8]. Ignorance, according to him, engenders *sankhāras*, 'the wrong conception of the world', and from this wrong conception of the world all the disappointments and discontent and dissatisfaction and disturbances proceed[9]. The ignorant man creates his own misery, for such misery is more subjective than objective. "The thirst of a thoughtless man", to use a simile of the *Dhammapada*, "grows like a creeper; he runs from life to life, like a monkey seeking fruit in the forest."[10] Hence "the real aim of life is the inquiry after *Tattva* (Truth)."[11] For "never goes one by darkness to the Holy Place."[12]

This quest for knowledge was so traditional in ancient India that even people abroad knew of it, and it must have become a common practice to travel to India to acquire it. The following story discovers this reputation of the Indian sages outside India. Jalālu'd-dīn Rūmī narrates that "a learned man (once) said, for the sake of (telling) a story: 'In India there is a certain tree; whoso takes and eats of its fruit, he grows not old, nor ever dies.' A king heard this (tale) from a veracious person; he became a lover of the tree and its fruit. From the Divan of culture he sent an intelligent envoy to India in search (of it). For (many) years his envoy wandered about India in quest (of the tree)", but all his efforts were vain: the tree was found nowhere. Finally one day he consulted a wise Shaykh, saying: "The Emperor chose me out to seek a certain branching tree. For there is a tree unique in (all) the quarters (of the world); its fruit is (of) the substance of the Water of Life.

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[8] *Saṁyutta Nikāya*, II, 12, 10; *Dīgha Nikāya*, II, "Mahānidāna Suttanta", pp. 55–58.

[9] *Mahāvagga*, I, 1, 2.

[10] *Dhammapada*, XXIV, 334 (*S. B. E.*, X, p. 81).

[11] *Śrīmad Bhāgavatam*, I, 2, 10.

[12] *Amṛtabindu Upaniṣad*, 15.

I have sought (it) for years and seen no sign (of it) except the gibes and ridicule of these merry men." The Shaykh laughed and said to him: "O simpleton, this is the tree of knowledge in the sage, very high and very grand and very far-spreading; it is a Water of Life from the all-encompassing Sea (of God)."[13]

After the study of ancient philosophical works, one easily realizes that the 'fish-eyes' of the ancient Indians—the eyes of wisdom of ancient India—were directed to the proper understanding of two points: God and the world. We shall briefly study their main ideas concerning these two points in this essay. Then we shall explain the necessary connexion between the possession of 'fish-eyes' and salvation, and finally we shall study the help it renders man for the practice of asceticism and in particular for the exercise of the virtue of indifference, so necessary in ascetic life. We shall close with a chapter on 'fish-eyes' and the glory of God, which is the only final goal all reasonable men should have in their activity in this world. In all this study, in order to show the continuity of the Indian tradition, we shall allow the philosophers of India themselves to express their views in their own words. Occasionally their views will also be elucidated by the statements of philosophers and authors of other nations.

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[13] Jalālu'd-dīn Rūmī, *Mathnavi*, II, 3641–3680. (Nicholson's transl., II, pp. 411–413). The story poetically narrated by the Persian poet seems to have had its historical foundation. The Sassānian king of Irān Khusru I Noshirvan (531–579 A.D.) had heard that there existed in India a book full of wisdom, and he had commanded his vazir Buzurj-mihr to find a man acquainted with the languages of both Irān and India to go to the latter in quest of the book. The man chosen was Burzûyeh. He travelled to India, got possession of the book, translated it into Pahlavi and brought it back to the court of Khusru. The book in question seems to have been the *Pancatantra*. Cf. Max Müller, *Chips from a German Workshop*, IV, p. 427.

I

KNOWLEDGE OF GOD

It has been rightly noted by a great scholar that "the highest wisdom of Greece was 'to know ourselves'; the highest wisdom of India is 'to know our Self'.[1] And the ancient *ṛṣis* of India were in real earnest as regards this quest. For they knew that "Brahman is the most eminent of all objects of knowledge."[2] For, as we read in an ancient Pahlavi text: "He, of whom this knowledge [of God] is not the leader of knowledge, is unaided by other knowledge."[3]

The first flash of wisdom that illumined the mind in Ancient India as regards God led those thinkers to give the proper definition of God. So we read in the *Kaṭha Upaniṣad:*

> "Not by sight can one obtain Him,
> Nor yet by speech or by the mind:
>
> Except by one who says: 'He is,'
> How can He be experienced?
>
> He should be apprehended as 'He is',
> And by His real nature—in both ways:
>
> When He is apprehended as 'He is',
> His real nature is made manifest."[4]

This definition seems to suppose a sort of an intuition to arrive at it. It is true that full knowledge of God, and thorough comprehension of his nature are absolutely impossible to the limitness of our faculties, as "He is incomprehensible, for

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[1] Slater, *The Higher Hinduism in Relation to Christianity*, p. 78.

[2] Śaṅkara, *Brahma Sūtras Bhāṣya*, I, 1, 1. Cf. *Mahābhārata*, Aśvamedhika Parva, 922—934.

[3] *Śikand-Gūmānīk Vijār*, V, 4 (*S. B. E.*, XXIV, p. 140).

[4] *Kaṭha Upaniṣad*, VI, 12—13 (Rawson's, p. 202). Cf. *Kena Upaniṣad*, 3; *Muṇḍaka Upaniṣad*, III, 1, 8.

He cannot be comprehended"[5]; and Kṛṣṇa says in the *Gītā*: "I know all beings, past, present and future, but no one knows me."[6] But it is also true that the knowledge of God, as the beginning and end of the whole creation, may be certainly acquired with the natural light of the human reason[7]. In fact, "God, because He is the only necessary being, the only *a se*, is also the only one who is intelligible *de se*, and who has no need of further explanation. It is necessary then that every intellection bear, ultimately, on the first intelligible."[8] For in general, "being is what the intellect conceives first as something best known, and it is to being that it reduces all other knowledge".[9] Through this inherent natural light of our intellect, we arrive at the knowledge of God as the one who *is*. *Asmi*, "I am", therefore describes the real nature of God. His essence is existence. Says the *Maitri Upaniṣad*: "'Brahma is', says he who knows the Brahma knowledge."[10] And in the *Tejobindu Upaniṣad* God Himself is introduced saying: "I am of the nature of *sat*."[11]

We read in the *Apocalypse*—the last book of the Bible—that God has a name "which no man knoweth, but he that receiveth it"[12], "because", as St. Francis de Sales puts it, "as He only perfectly knows his own infinite perfection, He also alone can express it by a suitable name."[13] When Moses received from God the order to go to the people of his nation in Egypt and to free them from their captivity, he addressed

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[5] *Bṛhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad*, IV, 4, 22.

[6] *Bhagavad Gītā*, VII, 26.

[7] *Vatican Council*, Constitutio de Fide Catholica, cap. II. (Denzinger-Bannwart, *Enchiridion Symbolorum*, 1785).

[8] Mersch, *Morality and the Mystical Body*, p. 12.

[9] St. Thomas Aquinas, *De Veritate*, q. 1, a. 1.

[10] *Maitri Upaniṣad*, IV, 4.

[11] *Tejobindu Upaniṣad*, III.

[12] *Apoc.*, II, 17.

[13] St. Francis de Sales, *Treatise on the Love of God*, p. 64.

God thus: "Lo, I shall go to the children of Israel, and say to them: 'The God of your fathers hath sent me to you.' If they should say to me: 'What is his name?' What shall I say to them?" Then God said to Moses: "I am who am." He said: "Thus shalt thou say to the children of Israel: 'He who is, hath sent me to you.'"[14] The Hebrew original of the expression, "I am who am" runs: *Eheieh asher eheieh*, which translated literally means "The Being is the Being", which is not tautology, because it refers to God. What other definition of the Being may in fact be given, than that it is the Being? For the Being by its very nature must exist, since, "in God", as Parmenides said, "there is, and can be nothing except Being."[15] Accordingly, "the proper name of God is Being."[16] Consequently, we read in the *Bṛhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad*: "In the beginning this world was *Ātman* alone in the form of a Person (*puruṣa*). Looking around, he saw nothing else than Himself. He said first: 'I am'."[17]

These indeed are very difficult metaphysical notions which were grasped very well by our ancient sages. The *Cāndogya Upaniṣad* defines God: "One indivisible that is pure existence."[18] And the *Gītā* says: "Its Being is Essential Self",[19] *i.e.* that which makes Him what it is. Which Lakṣmidhara explains thus, making God say: "Being is my very essence, not a property, like others' being; for as there is no Being save me, no class concept [of Being] can be allowed."[20] For, "the self-same thing which God is, is His existence."[21]

[14] *Gen.*, III, 13—14.

[15] Parmenides, frag. 8.

[16] Gilson, *The Spirit of Mediaeval Philosophy*, p. 51. Cf. St. Thomas Aquinas, *Summa Theologica*, I, q. 13, a. 11.

[17] *Bṛhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad*, I, 4, 1. (Hume's p. 81).

[18] *Cāndogya Upaniṣad*, VI, 2, 1.

[19] *Bhagavad Gītā*, VIII, 3.

[20] Lakṣmidhara, *Advaita-Makaranda*, 22. (Barnett's, p. 107).

[21] St. Thomas Aquinas, *Summa Contra Gentiles*, I, 11.

Hence if essence is what a being is, and existence, the act by which a being is, "God is the Being that exists and cannot not exist."[22] Accordingly, the *Sarvasāra Upaniṣad* says: "*Sat* alone is Brahman"[23]; for which we read in the *Aṣṭāvakra Saṁhitā*: "In the Ocean of the world, One only was, is and will be."[24] This very superabundance of positivity, which conceals the divine Being from our eyes, is nevertheless the light which enlightens the whole universe and in particular our intellect. "This obscurity is the greatest illumination of the mind."[25]

Illumined by this light, our ancient philosophers in very early days understood this Self-subsistence of God, which is the highest thought that metaphysics has ever declared. A ṛgvedic *ṛṣi*, wishing to describe God in contrast with primordial nothingness, finds no better way than to describe his self-subsistence. So we read in the *Bhāva Vṛtta*: *Ānīt avātam svadhayā tat ekam*[26]; "that one thing, breathless (*i. e.* without any external sign of life) breathed by his own nature,"[27] for as we read in the *Śvetāśvatara*: "He is his own source,"[28] and in the *Viṣṇu Purāṇa*, "founded on Himself"[29].

The *Brahma Sūtras* take us a step further when they assert that the Being, founded on Himself, has no beginning at all: "There is no origin for that which is, on account of the impossibility (of such an origin)."[30] Śaṅkara explains this

22 Olgiati-Zybura, *The Key to the Study of St. Thomas*, p. 43.

23 *Sarvasāra Upaniṣad.*

24 *Aṣṭāvakra Saṁhitā*, XV, 18, p. 117.

25 St. Bonaventure, *Itinerarium Mentis in Deum*, c. V, 4.

26 *Ṛg.*, X, 129, 2.

27 "By his intrinsic power", translates Coomaraswamy, *A New Approach to the Vedas*, p. 55.

28 *Śvetāśvatara Upaniṣad*, VI, 16.

29 *Viṣṇu Purāṇa*, I, 2, 10.

30 *Brahma Sūtras*, II, 3, 9.

impossibility: "Brahman, which is mere Being cannot spring from mere Being, since the relation of cause and effect cannot exist without a certain superiority (on the part of the cause)...........nor again can Brahman spring from that which is not (*asat*), for that which is not is without a self."[31] Mādhava explains the same in a different way. According to him *Sat* or Being is a positive entity, and that by nature; now such a positive nature cannot have anything to do with anything negative, or implying a negative element. Yet origin though positive in itself implies a negative element in the stage prior to the origin. Consequently there cannot be any origin for *Sat*, otherwise It would not be *Sat.*[32] Mādhava himself here records the opinion of the Buddhist philosophers of his own days, according to whom, "necessity of a cause befits not the existent (*Sat*), *i.e.* the Self-subsistent has no cause"; and they put this example: "If real existence were the nature of a water-pot and the like, the activity of its maker (the potter) would be superfluous."[33]

Very rightly therefore ancient Indian philosophers named God, describing His very nature, as *Svayam-bhū*[34], "the self-subsisting Being". Even according to the Śaiva Sidhāntists, "Śiva is the thing that stands by itself."[35]

Now since God is the source of His own Being, which cannot admit any negative element, He is "fulness that knows no lack"[36], as Manikkavasagar says. Consequently He is called

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[31] Śaṅkara, *Brahma Sūtras Bhāṣya*, *loc. cit.* (*S.B.E.*, XXXVIII, pp. 19—20.)

[32] Mādhava, *Bhāṣya* in *loc. cit.*

[33] Mādhava, *Sarvadarśanasangraha*, II (Cowell-Gough's, p. 23).

[34] *Bṛhadhāraṇyaka Upaniṣad*, II, 6, 3; IV, 6, 3; VI, 5, 6; *Iśa Upaniṣad*, 7; *Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa*, XIII, 7, 1, 1; *Manu Smṛti*, I, 6.

[35] Umāpati, *Kodi Kavi*, sūtra, II p. 2. In the village of Akkūr, on the road leading from Mayavaram (Tanjore Dt.,) to Tarangampadi (Tranquebar) there is a famous ancient temple dedicated to Śiva under the name *Svayambhūnātha*.

[36] Manikkavasagar, *Tiruvasagam*, XXII, 17 (Pope's, p. 221).

by the *Cāndogya* '*Bhūman*', *i. e.* 'the *Plenum*', or "the Plenitude of Being";[37] for as St. Gregory of Názianzum says, He is "an immense ocean of essence beyond all conception of time and of nature."[38] And St. John Damascene describes God as "an infinite and indeterminate sea of substance".[39] Says Maimonides: "If we could suppose the removal of all existent things but Him, His existence (blessed be He) would not cease to be, neither would it suffer any diminution. For He (blessed be He) is self-sufficient, and His existence needs the aid of no existence outside His."[40] This is to say that God exists necessarily; that existence belongs to His very essence. "If we could arrive at a knowledge of the Divine essence," says a modern author, "we could not represent it thus apart from its real existence. Existence is not something extraneous to its nature as such, but enters into the nature as a necessary constituent."[41]

It is therefore on account of this full identification of essence and existence in God, that He is described as "that Primordial Puruṣa who is without any birth",[42] "unborn, of imperishable nature",[43] "the Imperishable One".[44]

Explaining the doctrine of the Śaiva Siddhāntists of South India, Miss Paranjoti very accurately says: "The chief meaning of '*Sat*' is reality."[45] "In saying that God is '*Sat*" one should think of Him as real, and by this it is meant that

[37] *Cāndogya Upaniṣad*, VII, 23, 1; 24, 1; 25, 1.

[38] St. Gregory of Nazianzum, *Oratio in Theophania*, VII: Migne, *P. G.*, XXXVI, col. 318.

[39] St. John Damascene, *De Fide Orthodoxa*, I, q, 142: Migne, *P. G.*, XCIV, col. 835.

[40] Cohen, *The Teachings of Maimonides*, p. 31.

[41] Joyce, *Principles of Natural Theology*, p. 199.

[42] *Śrīmad Bhāgavatam*, II, 6, 9.

[43] *Bhagavad Gītā*, IV, 6.

[44] *Manu Smṛti*, I, 67.

[45] Paranjoti, *Saiva Siddhānta in the Meykaṇḍa Śastra*, p. 85.

through eternity He exists unchangingly;"[46] which is in perfect agreement with Kant's ideas: "The concept of an *ens realissimum*", he says, "is therefore, of all concepts of possible things, that which best squares with the concept of an unconditionally necessary Being: and though it may not be completely adequate to it, we have no choice in the mater, but find ourselves constrained to hold to it. For we cannot afford to dispense with the existence of a necessary Being; and once its existence is granted, we cannot, in the whole field of possibility, find anything that can make a better grounded claim (than the *ens realissimum*) to such pre-eminence in the mode of its existence."[47] That is the reason why Śiva is introduced in the *Tejobindu Upaniṣad* saying: "I am.........the sole *Sattva* (essence)."[48] "Know Me to be the Real."[49] And Śaṅkara says in his *Bhāṣya* to the *Cāndogya Upaniṣad:* "The Infinite, which is beyond all things, the True, the absolutely Real."[50] For "Brahman alone is what is ultimately real."[51] Thus He is styled in the *Bṛhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad, Satyasya Satyam,* "the Reality of realities",[52] an expression which corresponds to the *το ὄντως ὄν* of the Greek philosophers, *i.e.* He is the Supreme Reality upon which everything that is real in the universe is founded, and beyond which there is nothing real. Consequently it is said that "breathing creatures, verily, are the real. He is their Real."[53]

This Supreme realism in God is symbolized in Indian philosophy by a word. "Reality", says Prof. K.C. Bhattacharyya,

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[46] *Ibid.*, p. 87.

[47] Smith, *Immanuel Kant's Critique of Pure Reason*, p. 497.

[48] *Tejobindu Upaniṣad*, III, (Aiyar's, p. 84).

[49] *Ibid.*, p. 87.

[50] Śaṅkara, *Cāndogya Upaniṣad Bhāṣya*, VII, 16, 1.

[51] Dasgupta, *Indian Idealism*, p. 45.

[52] *Bṛhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad*, II, 1, 20.

[53] *Ibid.*

"as apprehended in religion, is indeed symbolized by 'I'."[54] For the first personal pronoun embodies the expression of a reality which is never truer than in God. *Aham*, 'I', contains an implicit statement which must have its subjective correspondence, and since the latter is supreme Reality only in the case of God, nobody but He is entitled to pronounce that name without fear, doubt, hesitation or shame. "His sacred name is *Aham*"[55], Śaṅkara tells us. And Śiva is introduced saying: "I am the 'I'."[56] *Aham* therefore is a revelation of objective changeless truth without any taint of error, for it refers to the Being which cannot be partly real and partly unreal. "There can never be a state of non-being in which what is could ever be; and there can be no transition from not-being to being. Nor can there be any change of that which is, for that would mean that it is not at one time what it is at another."[57] There cannot be any potentiality in God. We may therefore conclude with the *Cāndogya Upaniṣad* that God is *Ekameva advitīya*[58], "One without a second", for there is no other being, which is really Being, as He is, nor can ever be one; Himself being the Reality of realities, all other realities are real in Him, and vanish as smoke, apart from the supreme reality. "As all the spokes are held together in the hub and felly of a wheel, just so in this *Ātman* all things, all gods, all worlds, all breathing things, all *ātmans* are held together."[59] The expression *Ekameva advitīya*, which became the motto of the Advaitins at a later period, is a synthetic formula of metaphysics that embodies the summary of the highest doctrines that have ever been studied and discussed in the realm of theological thought. Job said something equivalent when

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[54] Bhattacharyya, "The Concept of Philosophy", in Radhakrishnan-Muirhead, *Contemporary Indian Philosophy*, p. 86.

[55] *Bṛhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad*, V, 5, 4. Cf. Śaṅkara, *Bhāṣya*, I, 4, 1.

[56] *Tejobindu Upaniṣad*, III, (Aiyar's, pp. 84—85).

[57] Cornford, *Plato and Parmenides*, pp. 33—34.

[58] *Cāndogya Upaniṣad*, VI, 2, 2.

[59] *Bṛhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad*, II, 5, 15 (Hume s, p. 104).

addressing God thus: "Thou who only art"[60]; and Avicenna: "There is only one Being"[61]; for "there is no counterpart of Him whose glory verily is great."[62]

This Reality of realities would not be so if He were not the Absolute Being. The absolute "is the acme of existence, the essence of reality",[63] "the inexaustible fulness of all that is".[64] Hence our ancient *ṛṣis*, having acknowledged God as the Reality of realities, also declare Him to be the Absolute.[65] There is a very early Indian word that expresses this idea in a marvellous way. The ṛgvedic word *Aditi* fully corresponds to the 'boundless' divine of Anaximander. *Aditi* is the boundless one. "That was called A-diti," says Max Müller, "the un-bound, the unbounded; one might almost say, but for fear of misunderstanding, the Absolute, for it is derived from *diti*, bond, and the negative particle, and meant therefore originally what is free from bonds of any kind, whether of space or time, free from physical weakness, free from moral guilt. Such a conception became of necessity a being, a person, a God."[66]

Max Müller, in that early age of European Sanskrit scholarship, was afraid of being misunderstood when rendering *Aditi* as the 'Absolute'. But, at present, we are not afraid to do so. Aditi is the Absolute not only etymologically, but even philosophically, for God is conceived absolutely unbound by any creature of the universal creation, nor influenced in any way. C. S. Lewis summarizes very beautifully the idea of the Absolute. "The freedom of God", he says, "consists in the fact that no cause other than Himself produces His acts, and no external obstacle impedes them—that His own goodness

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[60] *Job*, XIV, 4.

[61] Avicenna, *Sufficientia*, I, 4, fol. 16r, a-b.

[62] *W. Yj.*, XXXII, 3.

[63] Sirkar, *Hindu Mysticism*, p. 59.

[64] Atreya, *The Philosophy of the Yoga-Vāsiṣṭha*, p. 308.

[65] *Kaṭha Upaniṣad*, II, 6, 12, 13; *Śrīmad Bhāgavatam*, II, 4, 8.

[66] Max Müller, *Rig-Veda-Saṁhitā*, I, p. 230.

is the root from which they all grow and His own omnipotence the air in which they all flower."[67]

This freedom and independence of God from all the phenomena and imperfections of the ever-changing world is a dogma clearly asserted and firmly adhered to in Indian philosophy. So we read in the *Brahma Sūtras*, for instance: "That the entire Brahman undergoes change by no means follow from our doctrine, on account of sacred texts. For in the same way as Scripture speaks of the origin of the world from Brahman, it also speaks of Brahman subsisting apart from its effects."[68] God therefore is *Svatantra*, independent, free.[69] "No one in the world is His master, nor has anybody any control over Him............He has no parent, nor is there any one who is His lord."[70] Says the author of the *Adhyātma Rāmāyaṇa* addressing God: "Thou shinest as the One Absolute Existence, unaffected by the changes of things."[71] For, "as a piece of crystal appears red when red flowers are placed before it, so this *Puruṣa* appears to be affected by pleasure or pain from the reflection cast upon it by nature, but it remains ever unchanged."[72] "As the sun, the eye of the whole world, is not sullied by the external faults of the eyes, so the one Inner *Ātman* of all things is not sullied by the evil in the world, being external to it."[73] This is what is beautifully said by Kṛṣṇa in the *Gītā*: "I am the Lord of all beings, yet ruling over my own nature"[74], *i. e.* yet creatures do not rule over me, I am my own ruler, "nor does this work

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[67] Lewis, *The Problem of Pain*, p. 23.

[68] *Brahma Sūtras*, II, 1, 27 (*S. B. E.*, XXXIV, p. 350).

[69] Manikkavasagar, *op. cit.*, XXII, 7; XXIX, 29; XLII, 37. (Pope's, pp. 220, 258, 318).

[70] *Śvetāśvatara Upaniṣad*, VI, 9, Thyagīśānanda's Commentary, p. 120.

[71] *Adhyātma Rāmāyaṇa*, Bālakāṇḍa, V.

[72] *Kaṭha Upaniṣad*, V, II.

[73] *Sāṅkhya Sūtras*, II, 35.

[74] *Bhagavad Gītā*, IV, 6.

fetter me, O Dhanamjaya; remaining unconcerned like an ascetic, I am unattached to any of that work."[75]

There is still a further consequence which our ancient sages drew from the nature of *Svayambhū*. A self-subsisting being can have neither beginning nor end, for Himself is the reason of His existence, since "that which *is* can never not be at any time";[76] and owing to this very self-subsistence we cannot find in him any change or succession, for a change would mean a fault in His Being, which, as we saw, is plentiful, as He is *Bhūman*. Hence we read in the *Sarvasāra Upaniṣad* that God "is that which is without origin and destruction. It is that which is not subject to the six changes (viz.) birth, growth, manhood, decay, old age and death".[77] He is therefore Ananta. In ancient works He is consequently styled: 'Brahman, the old'[78] or 'the Ancient One'[79] or 'the Ancient Person'[80] or 'the ancient of days'[81]; a name which is also found with reference to God in the book of the Prophecy of Daniel[82]. Similarly some primitive peoples call the Supreme Being 'the most ancient and venerable'[83]. Other expressions are still more explicit: "Thou art eternal, unperishable."[84] "That One............which is eternal, which is without beginning or end."[85] For this reason God is often described as "laying brooding on Ananta, king of serpents, as Ananta floated upon

[75] *Ibid.*, IX 9 (Roy's, p. 112).

[76] *Yoga-Vāsiṣṭha*, III, 4, 62.

[77] *Sarvasāra Upaniṣad*, 10 (Aiyar's, p. 16).

[78] *Kaṭhaka Upaniṣad*, V, 6.

[79] Manikkavasagar, *op. cit.*, XXXVII, 25; *Adhyātma Upaniṣad* (Aiyar's, p. 60); *Bhagavad Gītā*, VIII, 9; *Kurma Purāṇa*, Pūrvārdha, I, 56, 16.

[80] *Bhagavad Gītā*, XI, 38; *Śvetāśvatara Upaniṣad*, II, 7.

[81] *Dīgha Nikāya:* Rhys Davids, *The Dialogues of the Buddha*, I, pp. 31, 32, 281; Tulsi Das, *Rāmāyaṇa*, I, 122.

[82] *Dan.*, VII, 9.

[83] Schmidt, *Primitive Revelation*, p. 131.

[84] *Śrīmad Bhāgavatam*, X, 14, 23.

[85] *Paingala Upaniṣad*, III (Aiyar's, p. 51).

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the waters".[86] *Ananta* means 'endless', not chronologically but ontologically, "without an inside and without an outside"[87], hence without beginning and end.[88] That is to say that God's support is eternity.

Though called 'old' and 'ancient' yet God is acknowledged as not growing old, as all other beings. Thus Manikkavasagar says: "Ancient One, First One that grows not old";[89] and God Himself is introduced saying in some ancient works: "My seat is free from (the attacks of) old age";[90] "I am without old age or death";[91] "I..........have no decay."[92] Śaṅkara gives the cause of His not growing old: "This Brahman, the *Sat*, is not exhausted in itself, for unlike the body It has no parts."[93] Consequently Manikkavasagar poetically says:

> "Ancient of days, existing ere the ancient world,
> Whose nature shares the newness of created things"[94],

which seems to be in the same strain as that of the Psalms: "Thou art ever the self-same, and the years shall not fail":[95] from which that famous expression of the Upaniṣads flow; *Sa eva adya sa u śvaḥ*,[96] "He alone is today, He also tomorrow." No succession of time is ever experienced in God. "The years of God", says St. Augustine, "are the eternity of God, and the eternity of God is the very substance of God, where nothing is past, as being no longer, nothing to come, as

[86] *Śrīmad Bhāgavatam*, III, 8, 10.

[87] *Bṛhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad*, II, 5, 19.

[88] That is the reason why *Ananta* as symbol of eternity is painted as biting its tail, at a later period.

[89] Manikkavasagar, *op. cit.*, XXXVIII, 29 (Pope's, p. 300).

[90] *Sanatsujātīya*, VI, 26 (*S. B. E.*, VIII, p. 194).

[91] *Tejobindu Upaniṣad*, III, (Aiyar's, p. 85).

[92] *Ibid.*

[93] Śaṅkara, *Bhagavad Gītā Bhāṣya*, II, 17.

[94] Manikkavasagar, *op. cit.*, VII, 33 (Pope's, p. 108).

[95] *Ps.*, CI, 28.

[96] *Kaṭha Upaniṣad*, IV, 13; *Bṛhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad*, I, 5, 23.

being yet to be. There is there only *is*, there is there no *was*, no *shall be*. Whatever is there simply is."[97] Hence that classical definition of eternity given by Boethius: "The simultaneously endless and perfect possession of life."[98] Summarizing all this we may say that the *Ṛgveda* calls God 'The Ever-Youthful'[99], and Gautama the Buddha, 'the Eternal Youth'.[100] God is in the eternal 'today', without ever having known 'yesterday', without ever looking forward to 'a tomorrow'. The grammar of God knows one tense only, and that is the present. That is the reason why Jesus Christ said: "Before Abraham *was* made, I *am*."[101]

We could explain many more points about God, which are very wisely discussed by ancient Indian philosophers, but these will suffice for the purpose of this essay. Their eyes were indeed properly open to understand the nature of God. They had 'fish-eyes'.

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[97] Rickaby, *Readings from St. Augustine on the Psalms*, p. 178.

[98] Boethius, *De Consolatione Philosophiae*, V, 348, 6; Migne, *P. L.*, LXIII, col. 858.

[99] *Ṛg.*, I, 146, 4.

[100] *Dīgha Nikāya*, III; "Aggañña Suttanta", XXVII, 32; "Mahāgovinda Suttanta", II, XIX, 19, 28, 44, 45, etc.

[101] *John*, VIII, 58.

II

KNOWLEDGE OF THE WORLD

It is narrated in the *Life of Socrates* by Aristoxenus of Taranto that the great Greek philosopher was once introduced to an Indian who had come to Athens. The Indian asked Socrates what was the object of his philosophical studies. Socrates answered that he was engaged in the study of human life; at which the Indian had a good laugh, and is said to have rejoined: "It is impossible, indeed, to acquire knowledge of things human, when divine things are ignored."[1] Probably owing to this lack of substantial foundation for his knowledge, it has been said, that "the Hindu, like the Egyptian, though perhaps for profounder reasons, thought the Greek but a clever child."[2] This has always been the system of Indian philosophy, namely to study first God and His nature at length, and afterwards to investigate the nature of the world and of man. The true knowledge of God gives the right point of view for the understanding of the perplexing character of the world; it supplies a point of comparison, without which man may easily arrive at erroneous conclusions. "To know all except the Knower is but ignorance."[3] For, then, an effort on our part "is needed, only to prevent us from regarding the not-Self as the Self."[4] "We cannot hope to comprehend God, but without God we cannot hope to comprehend anything else. Therefore we must in piety endeavour to make the idea of God as clear as our finite limitations permit."[5] For "the absolute futility of

[1] Aristoxenus Tarentinus, *Vita Socratis*, frag. 31, in Müller, *Fragmenta Historicorum Graecorum*, II, p. 281.

[2] Martindale, "The Preparation of the Gentiles", in Lattey, *The Incarnation*, p. 52.

[3] Ramana Maharshi, *Ulladu Narpadu or Sad-Vidya*, II, p. 3.

[4] Śaṅkara, *Bhagavad Gītā Bhāṣya*, XVIII, 50 (Sastri's trans., p. 489).

[5] Boodin, *God and Creation*, p. 4.

the things of earth is revealed in a strong and vivid light, and in a vigorous contrast with the reality that is God."[6] The *Bṛhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad* states this quite unequivocally: "The Universe (this all) is made known through the Ātman."[7] Indeed, "in God all else is perceived."[8] For, as Śaṅkara says, "as the rising sun dispels the gloom of night, so (does the knowledge of Brahman remove ignorance)."[9]

The first point of comparison is afforded by the definition of God we have already studied: God is *Sat*, *Svayambhū*. What is the world? Indian philosophers tell us that the world is *asat*. We must say in this connexion that they distinguish two kinds of *sat* and four kinds of *asat*.

Two kinds of *sat*:

(i) *SAT*, which is the nature of God, *ens a se*.

(ii) *sat*, which is the nature of the world, a *sat* which we have written with small letters to show that it is totally different from *SAT*. It is the nature of a contingent being, *ens ab alio*.

Four kinds of *asat*.

(iii) *ASAT*. The negation of all *sat*, both *SAT* and *sat*. This *ASAT* is purely hypothetical, for in any case *SAT*, *Svayambhū*, has always existed, since It has no beginning. *ASAT* therefore is absurd.

(iv) *asat*. The nothingness that existed before the creation. This *asat* does not exclude *SAT*, for it is the nothingness of the contingent world. Such is the nothingness described in the beginning of the *Nāsadīya Sūkta*[10].

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[6] Leen, *Progress through Mental Prayer*, p. 106.

[7] *Bṛhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad*, IV, 5, 6.

[8] D' Arcy, "The Philosophy of St. Augustine", in *A Momument to Saint Augustine*, p. 174.

[9] Śaṅkara, *Bṛhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad Bhāṣya*, II, 5, 15.

[10] *Ṛg.*, X, 129, 1–2.

(v) *a-SAT*. The negation of No. (i), ***SAT***. This a-SAT therefore is to be identified with No. (ii), *sat*, for *sat* is not ***SAT*** in any way. Therefore:—

sat=*a-SAT*.

In this sense the *Nāsadīya Sūkta* of the *Ṛgveda*, when describing the nothingness that preceded the creation (apart from God), says: *na a-SAT āsīt no iti sat āsīt.*[11] In order to emphasize this nothingness it refers to it under two denominations: nothingness of that *nature which is not* God's nature (*a-SAT*) and nothingness of that *nature which is contingent* (*sat*), both being the same.[12] In the same sense the Gītā says: *Brahma na sattannāsaducyate*[13], "Brahma is called neither *sat* nor *a-SAT*", thus emphasizing His thorough difference from the world.[14]

(vi) *a-sat*. The negation of No. (ii), *sat*. This *a-sat* is therefore to be identified with *SAT*, for *SAT* is an existence which is by no means the same as the existence of the world, that is *sat*. Hence:—

a-sat=*SAT*.

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[11] *Ṛg.*, X, 129, 1.

[12] Similar expressions are found in other Vedic works, for instance: "In the beginning this (universe) was not either, as it were, non-existent (*a-SAT*), nor, as it were, existent (*sat*)." (*Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa*, X, 5, 31.) In a previous chapter of this work it is stated: "In the beginning this (universe) was indeed non-existent (*asat*)." (VI, 1, 1, 1.)

[13] *Bhagavad Gītā*, XIII, 12.

[14] This phrase of the *Gītā* is one of the classical formulas of the *neti-neti* school of Upaniṣadic dialectics, which is the only reasonable method of approach for the seeker of God's knowledge. "Thou, dweller in thy cell, mark thee that we know how to say that which God is not, but who can say that which He is?" (*Eden's Fourfold River*, p. 57.) For "if thou hast understood, it is not God; if it is God, thou hast not understood." (St. Augustine, *Sermones de Scripturis*, LII, 6, 16: Migne, *P. L.*, XXXVII, col. 360). Because "we do not know what God is; we know only what He is not." (St. Thomas Aquinas, *Summa contra Gentiles*, I, 30).

From this we may conclude:--

First. That it may rightly be said that God is *a-sat*[15], *i. e.* not existing with the existence that all the creatures of the world are endowed with. His existence is much higher.

Second. That we may also truly say that the world is *a-SAT*, viz. endowed with an existence essentially different from the existence of God, and therefore it is not existent, with the existence of God. This *a-SAT* nature of the world is what is expressed in Western philosophy by the word 'contingency', which simply means uncertain occurrence. The world is therefore *sat*=*a-SAT*, *i. e.* contingent, uncertain, accidental. One thing is certain about it: that as it is today, so will it not be tomorrow. This continuous changing of the world contrasted with the steadfastness of God is marvellously described in the following ***śloka*** of the ***Kaṭha Upaniṣad***:—

> " A Person of the measure of a thumb[16],
> Like a light without smoke,
> Lord of what has been and of what is to be,
> He alone is today and tomorrow too "[17]

If is worth noting that the contingent world is described as "what has been" and "what is to be"; because being in a ceaseless flux it never is, which is only an attribute of the Lord, who "is today and tomorrow too."

From this we may deduce with our ancient Indian philosophers that the world is *saṁsāra*. This word comes from the verb *sru*, which means 'to flow'. *Saṁsāra* is the continuous total flow of the creation; the perpetual change of the Universe, as opposed to the steadfastness of God. If God is the unshakable pillar of the Universe, the latter is the flag on

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[15] *Taittirīya Upaniṣad*, II, 6; *Muṇḍaka Upaniṣad*, II, 2, 1; etc.

[16] *Anguṣṭha mātra Puruṣa*, in relation to his being the *antaryāmin*, dwelling in the lotus *mahāl* of the heart. Cf. *Kaṭha Upaniṣad*, VI, 17; *Śvetāśvatara Upaniṣad*, III, 13; *Maitri Upaniṣad*, VI, 38.

[17] *Kaṭha Upaniṣad*, IV, 13.

the top of it, always agitated by the wind; if God is the mountain, the world is the cascade that precipitously falls from the top to the deep ravine. As steadiness is opposed to motion, so is the nature of God different from the nature of the world. God is the Being; the world is not a being, it is not even a becoming, but a multiplicity of becomings. "Nothing can be so far apart as God and creature. In the first place because they are opposed as the one and the many."[18] "The one remains and the many change and pass."[19] This multiplicity of becomings are *saṁsāra.*[20] They all flow, with one another, together, jointly, in perpetual continuity, in endless succession; that is precisely the meaning of the preposition *saṁ*, *cum*, 'with', that has been prefixed to the verb *sru*, to form the word *saṁsāra*. The creation is the perpetual outpouring[21] of being from the vessel of nothingness held by God, man included in this perpetual flow; that is the reason why the woman of Thecua said to David: "We all die and like waters that return no more, we fall down into the earth."[22] The creation is the projection of God's being upon the screen of nothingness, always moving, always changing as an endless cinema film.

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[18] Müller-Thym, *On the University of Being in Meister Eckhart of Hockhheim*, p. 11.

[19] Srinivasachari, *Studies in Vedanta*, pp. 64–65.

[20] In modern times the meaning of the word *saṁsāra* has been by some transferred from a purely ontological plane to an ethical sphere. Since it means 'passing', and transmigration is conceived as the ceaseless passing of souls through this world and even through other worlds, "this repeated passing of souls is what is really meant by the word *saṁsāra*." Nirvedananda, *Hinduism at a Glance*, p. 31. Thus *saṁsāra* has become synonimous with transmigration. Cf. Sharma, *A Primer of Hinduism*, p. 55; Rhys Davids, *Indian Religion and Survival*, p. 14. Transmigration, if it were a fact, would also be *saṁsāra*; but it is not the only *saṁsara*. By restricting its meaning, besides receding from the old philosophical tradition of India, they enlarge the boundaries of *māyā* as an illusion, since then they theoretically forget the contingency, the *saṁsāric* nature, of the whole creation, which will practically mean making it similar to the Creator. That is the greatest *māyā*.

[21] Cf. *Ṛg.*, X, 129, 7.

[22] *II Reg.*, XIV, 14.

"Just open your eyes, your ears........all your senses. What do you notice? A variety of colours and hues; a multiplicity of sounds; many external bodies. Colours ever changing, sounds ever melting, bodies ever expanding and growing and developing. In one word the multiplicity of ever changing nature."[23] For "the world is in continual flux and change"[24] and "all things in this world are in continual change."[25] In fact "*pasam* (matter) is like the devil-car which moves so swiftly that one cannot ascend it."[26] Man cannot escape this fleeting nature of the world because he also is transient with all the rest. He is one of the figures projected on that screen.

Very properly God is called by the *Kaṭha Upaniṣad* "Eternal of the transient"[27], for He is the only one eternally steady above all the creatures of the universe that are in a perpetual flux. He is the one,

"At whose feet time rolling on
In years and days goes by"[28],

as we read in the *Bṛhadāraṇyaka*. "Life", says Bhartṛhari, "is as unsteady as waves of water; beauty of youth is only lasting for a few days; riches are momentary like thought; all enjoyments are as transient as flashes of lightning amidst a raining cloud."[29] It is the continual πάντα ῥεῖ of the Greek philosophers.

Now, we have seen that the world is *a-SAT*, opposed to the Supreme Reality; we may therefore rightly say that the world is unreal, not with that unreality that is equivalent to the first total

[23] Turmes, "The Master's System of Thought", *The Catholic Educational Review*, (Mangalore), VII, p. 92.

[24] *Majjhima Nikāya*, "Raṭṭhapāla-sutta", Chalmers, *Further Dialogues of the Buddha*, II, p. 33.

[25] Rodríguez, *Practice of Perfection and Christian Virtues*, I, p. 24.

[26] *Śiva-Jñāna-Pōdham*, IX (*J. A. O. S.*, IV, p. 91).

[27] *Kaṭha Upaniṣad*, II, 5, 13.

[28] *Bṛhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad*, IV, 4, 15.

[29] Bhartṛhari, *Vairāgya Śataka*, 80 (Gopi Nath's, p. 354).

nothingness, *ASAT*, or *atyantābhāva*, absolute nothingness, as some people grossly misunderstand when explaining the opinion of the Advaitins. Unreal is the world with reference to the reality of God. "From the standpoint of the Absolute, change is unreal and a mere appearance."[30] The world nevertheless has its own reality, its transient reality, which means that it is nothing apart from God. For this contingency of the world requires God as its support, just as the cascade requires the mountain to flow down to the valley, just as the flag requires the support of the mast before it can flutter in the wind, just as the vessel requires the powerful hand of God, the divine *māyin*, who pours being out of nothing. Descartes referring to man in particular says: "I am, as it were, a mean between God and nothingness,"[31] and so is the whole world; which is interpreted by Fr. Przywara thus: "Willing to be God and being nothing."[32]

No other is the meaning of the unreality of the world according to the Advaita School. "The Real is that which is always the same and the unreal is that which does not remain the same. The Real remains the same through past, present and future. It always is. Any object conditioned by the law of cause and effect is not absolutely real; for every effect is a change brought about by a cause."[33] Prof. Nalini Kanta Brahma explains how the transient world is called unreal. "The Absolute is one and without a second like it. The expressions like magical appearance, illusion, unreality, etc. perhaps serve more to indicate the absolutely transcendent character of the ultimate reality which is not at all affected by the changes that appear, than to describe the illusory nature of these changes. The changes are described as illusions, because

[30] Brahma, *Causality and Science*, p. 106.

[31] Descartes, *OEuvres*, I, p. 295.

[32] Przywara, "St. Augustine and the Modern World", in *A Monument to St. Augustine*, p. 257.

[33] Nikhilananda, *The Bhagavad Gīta*, p. 74.

just as in an illusion the mistaken appearance does not at all affect the nature of the locus or the substratum that is perceived illusorily, so also the world of appearance does not affect in the least or even touch the transcendent nature of the Absolute. This is why the phenomenal universe is described by Vedāntic writers as an illusion. It is to be noted, however, that the universe is not an illusion in the ordinary sense of the term, but is securely grounded in an orderly arrangement and system."[34] The rope of Śaṅkara is something real, a real being, a *bhāvarūpa,* just as the mirage is real, in the category of mirage.[35] "Thus the world experience partakes of both reality and unreality (*sad-asadātmakam*). It is unreal as it does not endure for ever, and real because it appears and is experienced."[36] If Śaṅkara emphasizes this unreality to the extent of having misled some of his followers, and especially some European scholars, it is due to the fact that he wanted to oppose the views of the Sāṅkhyas, who spoke of a self-existent *pradhāna* (*materia prima*), or of the Vaiśeṣikas who referred everything to the self-existent atoms. Śaṅkara was interested in bringing the whole creation under the power of Brahman. "This manifold world with its objects of enjoyment, enjoyers and so on has no existence apart from Brahman."[37] "Indeed there exists nothing............however subtle, removed and remote whether of the past or of the present or of the future, as separate from Brahman in space and time. Therefore name and form [*i. e.* the world] in all their variety have their being only in Brahman. Brahman's being is not in them. They have no being when Brahman is ignored and are therefore said to have their being

[34] Brahma, *op. cit.*, p. 107.

[35] "In the mirage, the water is unreal, but in its own nature (as mirage) it is absolutely real." (Vācaspati, *The Bhāmatī*, p. 19).

[36] *Yoga–Vāsiṣṭha,* III, 65, 5. Cf. Ātreya, *The Philosophy of the Yoga-Vāsiṣṭha,* pp. 352–353.

[37] Śaṅkara, *Brahma Sūtras Bhāṣya,* II, 1, 14.

in Him."[38] Which is according to what we read in the *Bṛhadāraṇyaka:* "Breathing creatures, verily, are the real. He is *their* Real."[39] Consequently "Radhakrishnan himself denies rightly that *māyā* implies that the world is an illusion or non-existing absolutely."[40] "It is not as chimeric as an air castle (*Gāndharvanagara*)", says Fr Kalathil interpreting Śaṅkara's mind, "as believed by the nihilists. If it were merely imaginary, that is, if there were no distinct objects like a pot, a mat, a house and the like there would be no distinct ideas either. Such distinct ideas require the existence, at least for a while, of distinct objects corresponding to them. The basis of these ideas is Brahma, just as the basis of the idea of silver is the shell. Those ideas vanish the moment the basis of those ideas, that is Brahma, is realized, just as the idea of silver vanishes the moment the basic shell is realized."[41]

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[38] Śaṅkara, *Taittirīya Upaniṣad Bhāṣya*, 519. Such is also the view of some modern Vedāntins, while commenting on their master. For instance: "In later stages, *sat* meant the Eternal and Absolute Reality.........while *asat* meant the unreal manifestation of that Reality upon itself unreal, because not independent of, or apart from that Reality; unreal also because transient and ephemeral and even illusory." (Kirtikar, *Studies in Vedānta*, pp. 191–192.) "Śaṅkara's idealism does not allow him to deny the existence of external objects as apart from perceiving minds and he does not adhere to the doctrine of *esse est percipi*. Thus he severely criticises the views of the Buddhist idealists, who refuse to believe in the existence of external objects as apart from the thoughts which seem to represent them." (Dasgupta, *A History of Indian Philosophy*, II, pp. 268–269.) From these few quotations one may deduce how misleading is the interpretation of the monistic philosophy of Śaṅkara given by Deussen, *The System of the Vedānta*, pp. 302–305, which is neither correct nor reasonable. Unfortunately many students have followed his lead. It is high time for stressing the simpler, purer and truer thought of the great *ācārya*. Cf. Kokileswara Sastri, *Introduction to Advaita Philosophy*, pp. 10–15.

[39] *Bṛhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad*, II, 1, 20; II, 3, 6. Cf. *Ibid.*, V, 5, 1–2.

[40] Coomaraswamy, "Eastern Religions and Western Thought", *The Review of Religion*, 1942 (January), p. 132.

[41] Kalathil, *God in the Bhagavad Gītā*, p. 63 (Doctoral thesis submitted to the Gregorian University, Rome, not yet published.)

This is precisely the Christian philosophical and ascetical attitude towards the creation in relation to its Creator. "All the inhabitants of the earth are reputed as nothing before Him."[42] "My substance is as nothing before Thee."[43] "All nations are before Him, as if they had no being at all, and are counted to Him as nothing and vanity."[44] Referring to all creatures the *Book of Wisdom* says: "Our time is as the passing of a shadow"[45]; which is more philosophically explained by St. Paul when he says that all earthly gifts "serve unto the example and shadow of heavenly things"[46]; and "are the shadow of things to come"[47]. Commenting upon which, says Fr. Cornelius à Lapide: "Vanity is opposed to the real object as a shadow; for this object, say a person, is truth, the vanity of which is his or her shadow. Hence just as the shadow follows the person, in the same way the creation follows its Creator, not to vanish and return to nothingness."[48] Thus St. Ambrose concludes; "Whatever exists in creation is nothing."[49] And Meister Eckhart: "Everything created is nothing of itself."[50] Which is explained by St. Albert the Great: "Whatsoever exists (in the creation) as far as it is, is nothing in this what is."[51] And it is still further elucidated by the same Eckhart: "Outside the Being there is simply nothing; and, what is more, this nothing is so nothing that it is not only beyond Being but altogether distinct from Being."[52] Hence

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[42] *Dan.*, IV, 32.

[43] *Ps.*, XXXVIII, 6.

[44] *Isai.*, XL, 17.

[45] *Wisd.*, II, 5. Cf. *Job*, VIII, 9; *I Paral.*, XXIX, 15.

[46] *Hebr.*, VIII, 5.

[47] *Colos.*, II, 16–17.

[48] a Lapide, *In Ecclesiastem*, I, 2.

[49] St. Ambrose, *De Officiis Ministrorum*, I, 30, 154: Migne, *P. L.*, XVI, col. 68.

[50] Théry, "Le Commentaire de Maitre Eckhart sur le livre de la Sagesse", *Archives d' Histoire Doctrinale et Litteraire du Moyen Age*, III (1928), p. 354.

[51] St. Albert the Great, *In Topicorum Librum*, VI, tract. I, c. 4.

[52] Théry, *op. cit.*, p. 412.

Fr. Roberto de Nobili, the great Jesuit philosophical writer of South India, puts it in a more popular way: "The world is as smoke"[53]; and Prof. Boodin: "Life is altogether just a false seeming."[54] Hence St. Augustine, after considering the instability and mutability of the material world, concludes: "If a man might say a 'nothing-something', or an 'is is-not', I would say this (world) were it; and yet in some way it was."[55] Fully right was therefore Hanumān when he replied to Bhīma: "O chastiser of foes, as regards your curiosity to know me, I tell you this: Why should a wise man be interested in superfluous things (*anarthakeṣu*)?"[56]

We are now in a position to understand the real meaning of the word *māyā*, the effects of which so much influence the life of man who has not acquired wisdom. According to Sāyaṇa the word *māyā* is derived from *mā*, 'to know', 'to measure'[57]. Consequently in the earlier language of the *Ṛgveda*, *māyā* means 'art', 'artifice', 'intelligence', 'wisdom' and 'supernatural power'[58]; and in the *Brāhmaṇas* it denotes 'supernatural skill' (which evidently includes 'wisdom') and 'divine power'[59]. Thus we read the following description of *māyā* in one of the later *Upaniṣads*: *Vikārajananīm māyām aṣṭarupām ajām dhruvām*[60]; "*māya* the birthless mother begetting the eight-formed differentiated universe". In this sense it had been said in the *Ṛgveda*: "He hath measured [*pariminoti* from the root *mā*] with his ray the boundaries of

[53] Nobili, *Satyavedasaarasangraham*, śloka 61, p. xvii.

[54] Boodin, *God and Creation*, p. 169.

[55] St. Augustine, *Confessions*, XII, 7, p. 331.

[56] *Mahābhārata*, Vana Parva, 11262–11263.

[57] Cf. Shāstri, *The Doctrine of Māyā*, pp. 28–29.

[58] Shāstri, *op. cit*., pp. 5, 8–9; Monier Williams, *Sanskrit-English Dictionary*, p. 811. According to the *Nighaṇṭu*, ch., III, sect. 9, *māyā* is one of the eleven names of *prajñā*, 'intelligence'.

[59] Shāstri, *op. cit.*, pp. 15–16.

[60] *Culikā Upaniṣad*, I, 3.

heaven and earth."[61] Which is equivalent to what is found in the book of *Proverbs:* "When he compassed the sea with its bounds, and set a law to the waters that they should not pass their limits: when he balanced the foundations of the earth."[62] And also the *Ecclesiasticus* inquires with reference to God: "Who hath measured the breadth of the earth and the depth of the abyss?"[63] Accordingly we read in Śaṅkara's *Bhāṣya* on the *Brahma Sūtras:* "If that Brahman is acknowledged as the cause of the world, all attributes required in the cause of the world are seen to be present—Brahman being all-knowing, all-powerful, and possessing the great power of *māyā.*"[64] And Sureśvarācārya says: "The world has been displayed by *māyā* acting in the form of will, intelligence and activity."[65] In this sense Kṛṣṇa says in the *Gītā* that "He is born by his own *māyā*"[66], *i. e.* He exists by the great power of His being. It is therefore acknowledged by Swāmi Abhedānanda that "*māyā* does not mean illusion, as some scholars think, but it is that power which produces time, space and causation, as also the phenomenal appearances which exist in the relative plane."[67] And Śri Aurobindo also states: "*Māyā* signifying originally in the Veda comprehensive and creative knowledge, Wisdom that is from old; afterwards taken in its second and derivative sense cunning, magic, illusion........... It is in the more ancient sense

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[61] *Ṛg.*, VIII, 25, 18.

[62] *Prov.*, VIII, 29.

[63] *Eccli.*, I, 2.

[64] Śaṅkara, *Brahma Sūtrās Bhāṣya*, II, 1, 37 (*S. B. E.*, XXXIV, p. 362).

[65] Sureśvarācārya, *Dakṣinamurti Stotra*, II, 33–34. Rightly therefore *māyā* is defined as "divine energy" by Joad, *God and Evil*, p. 257.

[66] *Bhagavad Gītā*, IV, 6. Cf. Shāstri, *op. cit.*, p. 23. Coomaraswamy, *A New Approach to the Vedas*, p. 57, rightly points out that the word *ātmamāyayā* of the *Gītā* has the same meaning as *svadhayā* of the *Bhāva Vṛtta* of the *Ṛgveda*. Cf. above, p. 8. Cf. also *Ṛg.*, IX, 73, 5 and 9.

[67] Swāmi Abhedānanda, "Hindu Philosophy in India", in Radhakrishnan-Muirhead, *Contemporary Indian Philosophy*, p. 57.

that the word *māyā* is used in the Upaniṣads, where, indeed, it occurs but rarely."[68] *Māyā* therefore is an attribute of Īśvara.[69]

Now the great work of *māyā*, of this supreme wisdom and supernatural power, of this omnipotent wisdom of God is the world creation. "That power of consciousness or active will, which is the creative energy of the Lord is *māyā*. Through that *māyā* the Lord has created the whole Universe."[70] "*Māyā* is the cloud and the worlds are the rain."[71] Yet the creation is an act of love. "God created the world by an act of love, for which no reason can be assigned except the free operation of his creative will."[72] "In creation God had no other purpose than to give expression to His love of His perfection by calling into being representations of it."[73] On this account Dr Coomaraswamy says: "Eternity is in love with the productions of time"[74]; which is according to the *Ṛgveda:* "Within these two, the exalted earth and Heaven, O Varuṇa, are all the forms Thou lovest."[75] For this reason very likely *māyā* also meant divine creative Love, as recorded by Prince Dārā Shikūh: "The first thing to come out of *chid akās* [*cit akāsa*=ethereal Knowledge'] was love (or '*Ishk*), which is called *māyā* in the language of the Indian monotheists."[76]

Now in many Vedic works the process of the Creation is briefly described: "*Devānāṁ pūrvye yuge asataḥ sat ajāyata.*"[77]

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[68] Aurobindo, *Isha Upanishad Analysis*, p. 30.

[69] Dandoy, *L' Ontologie du Vedānta*, pp. 69–70.

[70] Mādhava, *Pañcadaṣi*, VIII, 75.

[71] *Śrīmad Bhāgavatam*, III, 5, 26. Also the Śaiva Siddhāntists describe *māyā* as the cause, though material, of the world. Cf. Schomerus, *Der Caiva-Siddhānta*, pp. 130–133.

[72] Mascall, *He Who Is*, p. 110.

[73] Stufler, *Why God Created the World*, p. 19.

[74] Coomaraswamy, *A New Approach to the Vedas*, p. 5.

[75] *Ṛg.*, VII, 87, 2.

[76] Dārā Shikūh, *Majma'-ul-Baḥrain*, II, 5, p. 39.

[77] *Ṛg.*, X, 72, 2.

"In the first age of the Devas *sat* (existence) was born from *asat* (nothingness)."[78] "But, verily, my dear, whence could this be," we may ask with the Brāhman Uddālaka Āruṇi when he explains the creation to his son Śvetaketu. "How from *asat* (nothingness), could *sat* (existence) be produced?"[79] Who can conceive how something is made of nothing? "They could not sound this depth [of God's power], who held it for certain and approved principle that of nothing, nothing is made."[80] "On the contrary, my dear," Uddālaka himself replies, "in the beginning this world was just *SAT* (Being), one only without a second"[81]; suggesting thereby that though being could not be produced from nothingness by itself, it could be produced through the work of ***Svayambhū***, as is explained in another *sūkta: Asat ca-sat muhuh acakrih Indrah*[82]; "Indra brings near *asat* and *sat* in a trice", *i.e.* makes *asat* into *sat* (for the contrary would not be a positive action).[83] And then another *ṛṣi* rightly sings in the Creation Hymn: "Searching their heart thoroughly by thought (*manīṣā*), wise singers found

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[78] That this *asat* is really *asat* and not *a-sat*, the following text will clearly show: "Verily in the beginning there was here the *asat*. As to this they say: 'What was that *asat?*' The *ṛṣis*, assuredly—it is they that were the *asat*." (*Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa*, VI, 1, 1, 1).

[79] *Cāndogya Upaniṣad*, VI, 2, 2–3.

[80] St. Robert Bellarmine, *The Ascent of the Mind to God*, XI, 4, p. 210.

[81] *Cāndogya Upaniṣad, loc. cit.* This expression, which is often found in Vedic literature, only means that the only being existing then, as it were, in the midst of that nothingness was Prajāpati or Brahma: *Brahma vā idam agre.* He was, as it were, the whole universe. In the *Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa*, VI, 1, 1, 1, there is a parallel text: "Verily Prajāpati alone was here in the beginning." Cf. *Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa*, II, 5, 1, 1; VII, 5, 2, 6; X, 5, 31; XI, 2, 3, 1; XIV, 4, 2, 1; XIV, 4, 2, 23; *Aitareya Brāhmaṇa* II, 33; *Kāṭhaka Brāhmaṇa*, XII, 5, Ajātaśatru calls Brahman *apravartin* (*Kauśītaki Upaniṣad*, IV, 8), a word which is translated as "*solus ante principium*" by Coomaraswamy, *A New Approach to the Vedas*, p. 77.

[82] *Ṛg.*, VI, 24, 5.

[83] "Creation is the production of the whole substance of a thing in the previous absence of itself and of any other subject." (St. Thomas Aquinas, *Summa Theologica*, I, q, 65, a 3, *in corp.*)

there the relationship (*bandhu*) of *sat* (the existent) in *asat* (nothingness),[84] as if the latter were the ancestor of the former.

All this production of the universe out of nothing was done by God's intellectual power only: "He (Prajāpati) meditated silently in his mind; what was in his mind that became the *bṛhat* (*sāman*), *i. e.* the song."[85] He "by his mere thought and will accomplishes all his purposes."[86] "He created the mind thinking."[87] "First with a thought he created the waters."[88] Such is also the way how the creation was accomplished according to the ancient Egyptians: "When Rā, according to his desire, uttered the deep thoughts of his mind, that which He named had being. When He gazed into space, that which He desired to see appeared before Him."[89] Which is also said by Meister Eckhart: "And so with works in God: He thinks them and they are."[90] Sir James Jeans acknowledges the same when he states that the creation is "the materialization of thought."[91] Hence Śaṅkara concludes: "As ideas in the divine Mind are always real, the universe is regarded by many as an act of real divine ideation."[92] For, as Vasiṣṭha avers, "as the imaginative power of a man spreads the world of his fancy out, so does the creative power of the Absolute spread out this objective world."[93] Plato described God as "the Artificer of the universe"[94], and the *Mahābhārata* styles Śiva

[84] *Ṛg.*, X, 129, 4.

[85] *Pañcaviṃṣa Brāhmaṇa*, VII, 6, 1.

[86] Rāmānuja, *Brahma Sūtras Bhāṣya*, IV, 4, 22.

[87] *Bṛhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad*, I, 2, 1.

[88] *Manu Smṛti*, I, 8.

[89] Mackenzie, *Egyptian Myth and Legend*, p. 2.

[90] Eckhart, *Opera Latina, Auspiciis Instituti Sanctae Sabinae ad codicum fidem edita*, I, p. 238.

[91] Jeans, *The Mysterious Universe*, p. 145.

[92] Śankara's gloss to Gauḍapada's *Kārikās*, I, 8.

[93] Ātreya, *The Philosophy of the Yoga-Vāsiṣṭha*, p. 309.

[94] Plato, *Timaeus*, 28.

as the "Architect of the Universe", *Sarvaśilpapravartaka*[95]. For indeed, "God in relation to created things may be compared to the artist in relation to the work of art."[96]

Yet all this is as easily said as it is difficult to understand. "To understand the process of such creation is necessarily beyond us."[97] *Māyā* while creating the world is inexplicable.[98] This inability of our intellect to understand the great work of God's omnipotence, though He may carry it out without the least difficulty, is admitted by Śaṅkara: "Although the creation of this world appears to us a weighty and difficult undertaking, it is a mere play (*līlā*) to the Lord, whose power is unlimited."[99]

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[95] Sorensen, *An Index to the Names in the Mahābhārata*, p. 624. Very frequently God is called Viśvakarmā in Indian literature. This comparison of the artist or architect shows that creation is not synonymous with emanation, for the work of art does not physically emanate from the mind of the artist. The *Kaṭha Upaniṣad* confirms this view when it tells us that the eternal Ātman "has not become anyone" (II, 18), which is translated by Prof. Hiriyanna: "Nothing has (sprung) from it" (pp. 53–54). Consequently Vidyāranya Swāmi states that "the power of *māyā*, working as a magic power (*kalpikā*) is necessarily the fit cause (*śakti*) of the world." (Vidyāranya Swāmi, *op. cit.*, XIII, 10.) How the idea of emanation was introduced at a later period may be clearly seen by a comparison of a passage of the *Harivaṁśa*, which contains very early epic tradition, with another parallel passage from the *Manu Smṛti*, which favours the emanation theory:

Harivaṁsa, 35f.	Manu Smṛti, 1, 8.
"The Self-existent Lord desiring to produce various creatures,	"He desiring to produce various creatures,
....	*from his own body*
first of all formed the waters, and deposited in them a seed."	first with a thought created the waters and deposited in them a seed."

The idea of emanation, embodied in the *italicized* words of the *Smṛti*, is entirely absent from the former text.

[96] St. Thomas Aquinas, *Summa Theologica*, I, q. 27, a 1, *ad 3um*. Solomon also calls Divine Wisdom "the worker of all things". *Wisd.*, VII, 21.

[97] Pringle-Pattison, *The Idea of God in the Light of Recent Philosophy*, p. 285.

[98] Vidyāranya Swāmi, *Pañcadasī*, XIII, 36.

[99] Śaṅkara, *op. cit.*, II, 1, 33.

The same inability to understand the creation was readily admitted by some early *ṛṣis*, contemporary with the Buddha, as the latter relates: "There are, Bhaggava, certain recluses and Brāhmanas who declare it as their traditional doctrine, that the beginning of things was the work of an overlord, of Brahmā. To them I have gone and said: 'Is it indeed true that the reverend teachers declare it as their traditional doctrine, that the beginning of things was the work of an overlord, of Brahmā?' And they, so questioned, have answered: 'Ay', And then I have said: 'But how do the reverend teachers declare in their traditional opinion, that the beginning of things as the work of an overlord, of Brahmā, was appointed?' They, so asked by me, were unable to go any further into that matter."[100] This is not strange at all, for nobody has ever been able to explain the work of the creation adequately. "The height and depth of the notion of creation are more than we can appreciate in any one glance."[101] "All the Christian philosophers recognize that if the creative act is conceivable, it is not representable. We never create, we are incapable of creating, also we are incapable of representing to ourselves any truly creative action............Nothing is easier than to repeat that God has created things and created them *ex nihilo*, but how can we prevent ourselves imagining, even when we deny it, that that *nothing* is a kind of matter from which the creative act draws its effects?"[102] For "the idea of this great power is to us as unreachable as it is necessary."[103] Such is finally the idea, that seems to be implied in the final verse of the *Nāsadīya Sūkta*, where after proposing several questions about the creation the *ṛṣi* says that only God on high knows all this; who else could have any notion of it?[104]

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[100] "Pāṭika Suttanta", *Dīgha Nikāya*, III, XXIV, 14 (Rhys Davids, *Dialogues of the Buddha*, III, p. 25).

[101] D'Arcy, *The Nature of Belief*, p. 266.

[102] Gilson, *The Spirit of Mediaeval Philosophy*, p. 91.

[103] Sertillanges, *Saint Thomas*, II, p. 31.

[104] *Ṛg.*, X, 129, 7. Cf. Burnouf, *Essai sur Le Veda*, pp. 422–423.

This difficulty in understanding the effect of *māyā* was the cause of the secondary meaning of this word.[105] Creation being not understood, became equivalent to mystery,[106] and consequently *māyā* also has the meaning of mystery as early as the *Ṛgveda*, according to Sāyaṇa.[107] "Varuṇa's rule is so irresistible that it is called *māyā*, an object of wonder."[108] Thus for Śaṅkara *māyā* is "the inexplicability of the relation between the *Ātman* and the world."[109] This inexplicability, which became on many occasions the cause why this relation was not properly appraised, was finally expressed as an illusion produced by the world; hence the final derivative meaning of *māyā*, which appears for the first time in the *Śvetāśvatara Upaniṣad*:[110] "Know that nature (*prakṛti*) is *māyā* (illusion)."[111] Such is also the meaning of the word in later sectarian Upaniṣads.[112] "The world is like a juggler's show."[113] *Māyā* therefore is magic, a word that explains "the world, which otherwise is inexplicable and which is proved by reason of its visibility."[114]

Consequently *māyā* is two-fold; one in the Creator, the other in the creature. The former is the principle of creation, the latter is its result, *i. e.* the Universe;[115] the latter manifests itself under numberless names and forms (*nāma-rūpa*), producing the impression of a characteristic diversity (*bheda*), which is totally opposite to the perfect unity (*abheda*) which

105 Cf. Dandoy, *op. cit.*, p. 75.

106 Radhakrishnan, *An Idealist View of Life*, p. 344.

107 Shāstri, *op. cit.*, p. 10.

108 Siqueira, "Sin and Salvation in the early Rig-Veda", *Anthropos*, XXVIII, p. 180.

109 Radhakrishnan, *The Vedānta according to Śaṅkara and Rāmānuja*, p. 27.

110 Prasad, *Introduction to Indian Philosophy*, p. 12; Shāstri, *op. cit.*, pp. 35–36; Barnett, *Brahma Knowledge*, p. 38.

111 *Śvetāśvatara Upaniṣad*, IV, 10.

112 Shāstri, *op. cit.*, pp. 18–22. Such is also the meaning of *māyā* among the Sāṅkhyas. *Ibid.*, pp. 28–29.

113 *Aṣṭāvakra Saṁhitā*, VII, p. 59.

114 Prakāśānanda, *Vedānta-Siddhānta-Muktāvali*, 22, p. 116.

115 Cf. Dasgupta, *A History of Indian Philosophy*, I, p. 470.

the former rests upon, for founded on this unity the *māyā* in the Creator is not different from the Creator himself. The former is therefore *vidyā*, while the latter is the generator of *avidyā*. "*Māyā*, from root *mā*, to measure," says Ananda K. Coomaraswamy, "implies that the universe is the real of continuous quantity, and as such to be distinguished from as yet unmeasured on the one hand and from the unmeasurable on the other."[116] For this reason Sir Sarvapalli Radhakrishnan says: "The word *māyā* registers our finiteness and points to a gap in our knowledge. The magician produces a tree before us from out of nothing. The tree *is* there, though we cannot explain it, and so we call it *māyā*."[117]

We may now properly appreciate the difference between *saṁsāra* and *māyā*. *Saṁsāra* is something objective, existing in the realm of things; something which cannot be abolished, but whose subjective effects can be avoided and diminished. *Māyā* is a purely subjective impression that is produced by *saṁsāra* not properly understood; it is a state of the mind, which *must* be fought against by means of *jñāna*, for all this illusion is the effect of ignorance. "It is ignorance that conjures up the idea of the non-self; strictly speaking there is nothing but the Self",[118] *i. e. SAT*. "The root of this illusion", says Prof. Otto, "is the mysterious power of not-knowledge (*avidyā*). This is at the same time the ground of the pain that is in the world."[119] "Like *māyā*, *avidyā* is only the fiction of the actual world in so far as all things are taken as separated in their diversity"[120], *i. e.* without referring them to God who "is the single thread binding the whole plurality into a single

[116] Coomaraswamy, "Eastern Religions and Western Thought", *The Review of Religion*, 1942 (January), pp. 132–133.

[117] Radhakrishnan, *op. cit.*, p. 135.

[118] Śaṅkara, *Bṛhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad Bhāṣya*, II, 4, 14.

[119] Otto, *India's Religion of Grace and Christianity compared and contrasted*, p. 35.

[120] Heimann, *Indian and Western Philosophy*, p. 94.

unity."[121] Kṛṣṇa says: "On me is strung all this, as rows of gems upon a thread."[122] And the epic also states: "Like a bird tied with a string all creatures depend upon God."[123]

Just as a man on entering a room in dim light mistakes a rope for a coiled serpent (to use the comparison of Śaṅkara), even so the man who has not acquired wisdom mistakes tinsel for gold.[124] "*Māyā* is not, then, delusion (*moha*), though it may be the occasion of delusion, whenever we forget that 'all is not gold that glitters.'"[125] Man considers, at least in his actual behaviour, that all the things of the world are real and permanent, appreciating them as if they were God, when this appreciation should only be about God Himself. Saint Paul had already warned his disciples against such deception: "If any man thinks himself to be something, whereas he is nothing, he deceiveth himself."[126] But such is the miserable condition of man:

> "Of things devoid of truth,
> As real things men deem."[127]

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[121] Radhakrishnan, *The Philosophy of the Upanishads*, p. 59.

[122] *Bhagavad Gītā*, VI, 7.

[123] *Mahābhārata*, Āraṇyaka Parva, 1141.

[124] This comparison of the rope and the snake, so traditional among Indian philosophers, is also used by Sextus Empiricus: "For example, when a rope is lying coiled up in a dark room, to one who enters hurriedly it presents the simply 'probable' appearance of being a serpent; but to the man who has looked carefully round and has investigated the conditions—such as its immobility, and its colour, and each of its other peculiarities—it appears as a rope, in accordance with an impression that is probable and tested." Sextus Empiricus, *Outlines of Pyrrhonism*, I, 227–228 (Bury's ed., I, p. 141). Is it in any way the effect of Indian influence through Pyrrho, the founder of the School of Scepticism, who seems to have accompanied Alexander the Great in his expedition to India? The comparison is already found in the *Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa*, IV, 4, 5, 3: "Snakes are like rope." Shakespeare, who could not be influenced by Indian thought, uses another comparison:—

> "Or in the night, imagining some fear
> How easy is a bush suppos'd a bear!".
>
> *A Midsummer-Night's Dream*, V, 1, 22.

[125] Coomaraswamy, *op. cit.*, p. 133.

[126] *Gal.*, VI, 3.

[127] *Kurral*, I, 36, 351 (Pope's, p. 48).

Plato thinks that the ordinary man is not truly awake, but "is walking about like a somnambulist in pursuit of phantoms."[128] "Because of this *māyā* the un-Real appears to be Real."[129] Man deluded by *māyā* puts his heart in the midst of the things of the world, as if he were to remain here for ever, without realizing that "this earth is nothing but a miserable exile, a bitter winter; heaven is our true fatherland and the most delightful summer. This life, however much prolonged, is short indeed if we compare it to eternity: it can hardly be called a moment. How quickly do all the things of this world pass by, fly away and fail!"[130] Very wisely did Emperor Akbar carve over the main doorway to the mosque of Fathpur the following lines which he partly culled from several Arabic works:

"The world is a bridge;
Pass over it,
But build no house therein."[131]

This fixing our tent in the middle of the bridge, which in reality is only a passage from time to eternity, is the effect of

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[128] Plato, *Meno*, 80e.

[129] *Śrīmad Bhāgavatam*, III, 7, 16.

[130] Blosius, *The Sanctuary of the Faithful Soul*, I, p. 35.

[131] Pick, *Remains of Gospels and Sayings of Christ*, p. 100. As regards the quotation from Arabic works, cf. Asin et Palacios, *Logia et Agrapha Domini Jesu apud Moslemicos Scriptores, asceticos prasertim, usitata*, in *Patrologia Orientalis*, XIII, pp. 377 and 404 (1915). Similar words are also found in the *Qasasul-Ambia* (Narratives of the Prophets), which is rendered into Urdu and entitled: *Tawarikh-i-Khulasat-ul-Ambia*. The passage occurs on p. 234. This bridge of the Fathpur epigraph is the *setu* that the *ṛṣi* "speads over the waters", of *Ṛg*, X, 61, 16. (Cf. *Ibid.*, VIII, 67, 8); one that is "hard to reach after conquering the godless enemy". *Smv.*, II, 3, 1, 3, 2=2, (243). It is the *Cinvat peretu*, "the bridge of the gatherer" of the Irānians, which "the spirit of the righteous must cross over when proceeding from the perishable to the imperishable world." (*Vendīdād*, XIX, 29–31. Cf. *Bundahiŝh*, XII, 7). This bridge is supposed to be broken by those selfish people who live not for the Self, but for themselves, in *Maitri Upaniṣad*, VII, 10. "This bridge being our way to a desired goal, those who break it down are manifestly fools." (Coomaraswamy, Doña Luisa, "The Perilous Bridge of Welfare", *Harvard Journal of Asiatic Studies*, VIII (1944), p. 212).

ahaṅkāra, 'selfishness'—a poisonous flower from the evil root of *māyā*, the dark cloud of unreality. "The sophist takes refuge in the darkness of not-being, where he is at home and has the knack of feeling his way; and it is the darkness of the place that makes him so hard to perceive."[132] "Dwelling in the midst of darkness," we read in the Upaniṣads, "wise in their own conceit and taking themselves to be very learned, the ignorant go round and round, staggering to and fro, like blind men led by the blind."[133] For as Tulsi Das says: "Fools do not perceive their own error."[134] And indeed, as the *Śrīmad Bhāgavatam* wisely puts it, "though it is the universal experience that everything in this world vanishes away, yet do men remain attached to the dream of earthly life, forgetting that the Lord alone abideth for ever."[135]

This deception produced by the *saṁsāra* of the world, even affects the soul of the spiritual man who tries to avoid it and to fix his soul only on the perennial fulcrum of the universe that is God. "Even when we know that our final goal is much higher," says Upādhyāya Brahmabāndav, "we say to ourselves: 'Let us begin with the finite; let us make the finite our goal, and by this we will make the Infinite our goal.' That is an error. A bird is made to fly: can it be made to fly, if it is made to walk only? No; we must fly in the air of immensity."[136]

The connexion between *māyā*, as illusion and *avidyā* 'ignorance' is so intimate that it is not easy to distinguish between the two. Sometimes it is said that "ignorance itself is *māyā*."[137] Śaṅkara ascribes the same functions to *avidyā* and

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[132] Plato, *Sophist*, 254 A.

[133] *Muṇḍaka Upaniṣad*, I, 2, 8; *Kaṭha Upaniṣad*, II, 5; *Maitri Upaniṣad*, VII, 9.

[134] Tulsi Das, *Rāmayaṇa*, I, 123 (Growse's, I, p. 69).

[135] *Śrīmad Bhāgavatam*, II, 1, 1–5.

[136] Upādhyāya, *The Infinite and the Finite*, p. 5.

[137] *Śrīmad Bhāgavatam*, III, 1.

to *māyā*, for all practical purposes.[138] Deussen prefers to regard *avidyā* as the cause and *māyā* as the effect.[139] Yet we are of opinion that *māyā* is the cause and *avidyā* is its effect. For the latter is a purely negative entity, "*avidyā* is unreal"[140], which cannot produce anything positive, and *māyā*, in the sphere of illusion, is something undoubtedly positive. Moreover *māyā*, 'illusion', is the first result of the inspection of the universe on the part of man, viz. a misapprehension of realities, the mistaking of a snake for a rope, the centripetal attraction of the cascade with consequent forgetfulness of the mountain, the allurement of the mirage on the sight of the traveller. When the latter reaches the spot, he finds nothing there. This nothing is *avidyā*, darkness, a blank. Such darkness is the origin of all the evil that befalls the human soul.

Yet it is totally wrong to conclude that God is the cause of this delusion and ignorance. "The Mighty Lord (*Maheśvara*) is the *māyin* (the magician)," says the *Śvetāśvatara Upaniṣad*,[141] a statement which is repeated in other works.[142] The *Bṛhadāraṇyaka* even styles God *jālavān*, "the net-spreader,"[143] wherein man is entangled in the illusion of *saṁsāra*; for in fact

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[138] In this sense Swāmi Śivānanda says: "Absence of light is darkness. Darkness is not a real entity. Darkness has a negative existence. So *māyā* has a negative existence." Śivānanda, *Vedanta in Daily Life*, p. 169.

[139] Deussen, *The System of the Vedānta*, p. 302. Cf. Urquhart, *The Vedanta and Modern Thought*, pp. 139–140.

[140] *Yoga-Vāsiṣṭha*, VIa, 40, 11.

[141] *Śvetāśvatara Upaniṣad*, IV, 10.

[142] For instance *Sarva Upaniṣad*, 4; Manikkavasagar, *Tiruvāsagam*, V, vv. 106 and 380, etc. Even in the West this idea has also been repeated; "The Magician has power in this mystery". (Böhme, *Sex Puncta Mystica*, VI, 2). The word *māyin* is often translated as "magician" or "juggler". "What does a magician or a juggler do? He shows an empty-box to his onlookers. There is nothing in the box; thin air; and all of a sudden he draws from it rabbits, flowers, cloth, toys and all sorts of things. So did God in the beginning of the world; out of nothing he produced the whole Universe, as a real magician which He is, indeed." (Heras, *The Story of Evolution*, p. 31).

[143] *Bṛhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad*, II, 1, 20.

He is the creator of the world of *saṁsāra*, produced not precisely for causing man's deception but for his welfare. *Saṁsāra* cannot but be *saṁsāra*, and its effects on the mind of man are not necessarily *māyā*. But "we live in a world of *avidyās* and *ahamkāras*."[144] This illusion and deception are the work of man only, due to the fact that his shortsightedness does not allow him to see the light that issues from the creation itself to understand the works of God, just as the owl, dazzled by the light of the sun, sees nothing in the middle of the day. Aristotle compares the human intellect to the eyes of bats, saying that as bats are blinded by the light of the day, and yet see in the dusk, so man has but a dim and imperfect cognition of the things which in themselves are such as to evoke the clearest knowledge[145]. The real illusion is not precisely the trick of the great Magician, but my own persistence in the vain belief that I and the world *exist* apart from the pure, undifferenced unity of the Self. God cannot be the deceiver, for He is infinite Truth, Himself being the Supreme Reality: "Brahman is not the author of ignorance nor subject to error;"[146] and He expects that all men will arrive at this Truth, using the creation itself as a ladder to climb to that supreme height. "Creation was made subject to vanity," says St. Paul, "not of its own will, but by reason of Him who subjected it; yet with hope that creation itself shall be freed from its slavery to corruption into the freedom of the glory of the children of God. For we know that all creation doth groan and travail together to this hour."[147]

Man therefore may in principle escape the delusion produced by the world of *saṁsāra*; but how difficult it is in practice! A man, sinking in a marshy swamp, cannot extricate himself without external help. The Italian sculptor Queirolo,

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[144] Dandoy, *Catholicism and National Cultures*, p. 9.

[145] Aristotle, *Metaphysics*, II, 1, 2 (993 b 9-11).

[146] Śaṅkara, *Bṛhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad Bhāṣya*, I, 5, 10.

[147] *Rom.*, VIII, 19-23.

towards the middle of the 18th century, produced a plastic representation of the vain efforts of man left alone, in trying to release himself from the net of error: all his movements find him more and more entangled in the fatal meshes. Only when God sends a ray of light, personified by the angel in the sculpture, man succeeds in obtaining freedom.[148] "Easy (is) the way of vision," says Umāpathi, "but twixt eye and object light must be. Without the light of grace twixt soul and known, soul sees not."[149] And this grace is a liberal gift from God. That is the reason why Prof. Radhakrishnan says: "By the help of God it is possible for man to escape from the (illusion of) the world of *saṁsāra*."[150] Acknowledging this great truth, the Maratha poet Moropant, said: "In crossing the river of ***Māyā***, O Rāma, thy feet are the linked pumpkin float."[151] And Jñānadev says addressing the Lord: "Knowledge ripens at thy feet."[152]

Man uniquely situated in creation between the world of the spirit, which makes him similar to God, and the material world which links him with the animal kingdom, feels a double opposite attraction, comparable to the two opposite kinds of magnetism experienced at the poles of a magnet. By one he is invited to fly to the pure regions of one unchanging Truth; by the other he is drawn to the swampy multiplicity of matter. Since "the outward appearance of things deceives us,"[153] some Neo-Platonist authors advise us that "to discover light and truth, one must look beyond the senses and sense images and enter into himself."[154] So when a man "draws his senses in

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[148] The statue is now in the chapel of San Severo, in Naples.

[149] Umāpathi, *Tiru Arul Payan*, VI, 56 (Pope, *Tiruvasagam*, p. LII).

[150] Radhakrishnan, *The Reign of Religion in Contemporary Philosophy* p. 429.

[151] Moropant, *Kāvyasangraha*, XXIX, 5, in Abbot, *Stotramāla* p. 191.

[152] Jñānadev, *Jnāneśwari*, XII, 8. Cf. Abbot, *op. cit.*, p. 5.

[153] Maturin, *Laws of the Spiritual Life*, p. 134.

[154] Cf. Mersch, *The Whole Christ*, p. 386.

from things of sense on every side, as a tortoise draws in its limbs, firm set is that man's wisdom."[155] Such was the practice of the Maratha ***bhakta*** Tukaram: "I will hide myself within me like a tortoise: I will fix my eyes upon Thee and shall never allow myself to be separated from Thee. To contemplate Thee is to serve Thee."[156] So also did St. Augustine, when in the days of his youth he was attracted by the pleasures of the world. "Thus counselled to return to myself, I entered into my innermost soul, by Thy guidance," says he addressing the Lord. "This I was able to do because Thou hadst become my helper. I entered, and with new eyes that were superior to those of my mind I saw an unchangeable Light. It was not the ordinary light that is visible to the eyes of the body, nor was it simply a greater light of the same nature made to shine much more brilliantly and to fill all things with its immensity. No, it was not above my mind in the same manner that oil rises above water, or as the heavens are above the earth. It was above me because it had made me, and I was beneath it because I was made by it. He knows his Light who knows Truth, and who knows it, knows eternity. It is known to Love. O eternal Truth, and true Love, and lovable Eternity! Thou art my God. I sigh after Thee day and night. When first I came to know Thee, Thou didst raise me up, to show me how many things were still unknown to me and how incapable I was as yet of knowing them. Thou didst shine brightly within me, and didst show me the limitations of my own vision; and I trembled with love and fear. I saw that I was far from Thee, on an entirely different plane, and Thy voice came to me, as if from above: 'I am the food of the great; grow and thou shalt eat Me. Thou wilt not change Me into thyself, like the food of thy flesh; thou wilt be transformed into Me.' "[157]

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155 *Bhagavad Gītā*, II, 58.

156 Tukaram, *Abhangāchi Gātha*, part I, No. 258, p. 38.

157 St. Augustine, *Confessions*. VII, 10: Migne, *P. L.*, XXXII, col. 687.

The first effect of this withdrawal from the world of the senses is a high appreciation of the spiritual world which will finally lead the soul to contemplate things eternal. "Close the eyes of the body; before the inward gaze of the mind all this change and multiplicity collapses into one mould; and is steady, immovable unity of *being*, nothing so high, nothing so low, but it is being. Nothing so fleeting, fluent, but the mind declares it to be being, ***steady*** being. Nothing so multiple and various........ it must be ***being.*** Being to the right, being to the left, being tall or being small, being pleasant or unpleasant, being good or bad, each one of them, their totality, all is being, and therefore steady and therefore one. The universe is all change and multiplicity to the senses, the universe is all steady, immovable rest and unity, One, to the mind."[158] "For where there is a duality (***dvaita***), there one smells another; there one hears another; there one speaks to another; there one thinks of another; there one understands another. Where, verily, everything has become just one's own self, then whereby and whom would one smell? then whereby and whom would one see? then whereby and whom would one hear? then whereby and to whom would one speak? then whereby and whom would one understand? whereby would one understand him by whom one understands this All?"[159] Because "all being is an irradiation of the Divine Being, all movement one of its actions, every ideal a reflection of its thought, every good which attracts us a snare set by His Heart."[160] Thus "in nature we find God; we do not only infer from nature what God must be like, but when we see nature truly, we see God self-manifested in and through it."[161]

This is not equivalent to admitting a doctrine of practical pantheism nor, much less, a theory of idealistic life. The

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[158] Turmes, *op. cit.*, pp. 92–94.

[159] *Bṛhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad*, II, 4, 14; IV, 3, 21.

[160] Sertillanges, *The Church*, p. 22.

[161] Temple, *Nature, Man and God*, p. 266.

universe exists in reality and because it exists in dependence on God, it is totally different from Him. "God is said to be in all things by essence, not indeed by the essence of the things themselves, as if He were of their essence; but by His own essence; because His substance is present to all things as the cause of their being."[162] "As on a dark night", says Sanatkumāra to king Pṛthu, "one sees a rope as a snake, so, because of ignorance, does one see the one absolute existence as this manifold universe. But, as when the light comes, the snake vanishes, so when the light of knowledge dawns, the manifold universe vanishes and there remains the Saccidānanda—absolute existence, absolute knowledge, absolute bliss."[163] One who has acquired this mystical knowledge, one who sees One only in the midst of the diversity of the Universe, owing to his intellectual training, sees God in all and all in God, which is a very high attainment in the ascetical life of man. "It is—as, when a drum is being beaten, one would not be able to grasp the external sounds, but by grasping the drum or the beater of the drum, the sound is grasped. It is—as when a conch-shell is being blown, one would not be able to grasp the external sounds, but by grasping the conch-shell or the blower of the conch-shell the sound is grasped. It is—as when a lute is being played, one would not be able to grasp the external sounds, but by grasping the lute or the player of the lute, the sound is grasped."[164]

For these three instruments, the drum, the conch-shell and the lute, do not exist as such, but for the sound they produce; consequently the materiality of the playing itself, of the instrument and of the player is an imperfection in relation to the sound. If any one could therefore perceive the sound, by seeing the instrument only, or by looking at the player only, without being in need of hearing the material sound of the

[162] St. Thomas Aquinas, *Summa Theologica*, I, q. 8, a. 3, ad 1.

[163] *Śrīmad Bhāgavatam*, IV, 22, 26–31 (Prabhavananda's, p. 51).

[164] *Bṛhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad*, II, 4, 7–9.

instrument played by the musician; that one would be in a much higher and perfected state of perception. What would be for him the use of the actual playing if without playing he can perceive the spiritual sound within his soul? In the same way the whole creation does not exist for itself; but to lead man to the perception and knowledge of God. "And the other things on the face of the earth are created for man, and to aid him in the prosecution of the end for which he is created."[165] "Truly, whosoever hath inward eyes may see that all God's works are as censors sending up an odour of the sweetness of his glory; and whoso hath inward ears may hear them (as it were a concert of all kind of musical instruments) praising God."[166] "See now the height and breadth of the Eternal Worth," says Dante, "which hath made for itself so many mirrors wherein It is refracted, and yet remains within Itself One, as before."[167] By this multiple refraction man may ascend to the contemplation of the One Divine Model. "It is multiple because it is fitting that the epitome of perfection, God, should be illustrated by a thousand-and-one splendours."[168] God has given man his understanding to make this ascension easily through the ladder of the creation to the Creator. "For the invisible things of Him, from the creation of the world, are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made; His eternal power also and divinity."[169] Thus "this *ātman* (the human soul) is the *padanīya* (trace) of this All (God), for by it one knows this All; just as, verily, one might find (another) through a footprint."[170] "Whenever you turn, He speaks to you through His own footprints left upon his work."[171] "For the wonders of the visible

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[165] St. Ignatius of Loyola, *Spiritual Exercises*, Principle and Foundation.

[166] St. Robert Bellarmine, *The Ascent of the Mind to God*, X, 3, pp. 185–186.

[167] Dante, *Paradiso*, XXIX, 142–145.

[168] D'Arcy, *Thomas Aquinas*, p. 179.

[169] *Rom.*, I, 20.

[170] *Bṛhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad*, I, 4, 7.

[171] St. Augustine, *De Libero Arbitrio*, II, 16, 41: Migne, *P. L.*, XXXII, col. 1263.

creation are the footprints of the Creator. Himself, as yet, we cannot see, but we are on the road that leads to vision, when we admire Him in the things that He has made. And so we call created things His footprints, since they are made by Him and guide us to Himself."[172] "He has left his secret marks everywhere and they only need to be found."[173] For they are meant to be but manifestations of those which are from eternity, viz. God Himself.[174] The trained soul therefore without need to consider the multiplicity of the world, without looking at the rungs of the ladder, without paying attention to the creatures themselves, has his gaze on the One Supreme Reality on the top of it, at the end of the journey, that One whose Being is in all and all in It:

> "By the mind alone is It (Brahman) to be perceived.
> There is on earth no diversity.
> He gets death after death,
> Who perceives here seeming diversity.
> As a unity only is It to be looked upon—
> This indemonstrable, enduring Being,
> Spotless, beyond space,
> The unborn Self, great, enduring.
> By knowing Him only, a wise
> Brāhman should get for himself intelligence."[175]

"The perfect man is not aware of anything other than God, his own higher self."[176] In the same way writes Thomas von Kempis: "He to whom all things are one, he who reduceth all things to one, and sees all things in one; may enjoy a quiet mind, and remain peaceable in God."[177] "If your spirit stand firm on the inner meaning of things," says a promising young

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[172] St. Gregory the Great, *Moralium*, XXVI, 12: Migne, *P. L.*, LXXVI, col. 358.

[173] Maritain, *The Things that are not Caesar's*, p. 107.

[174] Cf. St. Thomas Aquinas, *Summa Theologica*, I, q. 47, a. 1; III, q. 23, as. 2 and 3.

[175] *Bṛhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad*, IV, 4, 19–21 (Hume's, p. 143).

[176] Tyāgiśānanda, *Aphorisms on the Gospel of Divine Love*, p. 67.

[177] Kempis, *The Imitation of Christ*, I, 3, 2.

writer, "and if it look clear-eyed and unblinking at the sun of ultimate realities, if it open its mind to read everything in that light of Truth and to sing of that splendour of Beauty and its Warmth of Love—then, indeed, little brother, you will have finally risen from sleep to wakefulness; and from the Desert of Death you will have launched out to fly..........and then,......you will soon pass through the Lane of Emptiness on to the River of Fulness, the river which flows into the infinite Ocean of Happiness."[178] For, "a person with a synoptic view, *Brahma dṛṣṭi*, sees everything under the form of eternity."[179] Thus man's life will not be wasted in pursuing phantoms.

> "As water rained upon rough ground
> Runs to waste among the hills,
> So he who sees qualities separately
> Runs to waste after them.
> As pure water poured forth into pure
> Becomes the very same,
> So becomes the very soul, O Gautama,
> Of the seer who has understanding."[180]

Such was also Plato's view. According to him, "he who has grasped the supreme principle of truth, which he calls the idea of God, is by it carried beyond all the contradictions of ordinary experiences and has become able to regard the confused and shadowy world of appearances from a higher point of view. He has become possessed of a divine pattern, by means of which he can bring order into the transitory life of man in this world."[181]

This mystical power of seeing the Infinite through, and beyond, the material things that surround us will be understood much better by another homely comparison. When you look at your image in a mirror, you properly do not look at yourself,

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178 Chenoy, "The Tree of Life", *St. Xavier's College Magazine*, (Bombay), XXXVII (1945), p. 87.

179 Srinivasachari, *Studies in Vedanta*, p. 49.

180 *Katha Upaniṣad*, IV, 14–15.

181 Caird, *The Evolution of Theology*, I, p. 153.

but at the mirror only, yet you actually forget that the mirror is before your eyes and think of yourself only. Now the creation is the mirror of God. The Advaitins call it *bhāsa*, the brightness, the splendour of God. God, indeed, is pure light (*bimba*), which while passing through the prism of his omnipotence is dispersed in innumerable colours throughout the whole creation, which thus reflects the light of the Creator in numberless rays. For whatever we contemplate directly is the portrait of Him painted, so to speak, by his own infinite skill on the canvas of the universe. "We know much about God, but we do not see Him...But we do see God as by means of a mirror, dimly, *i. e.* reflected in his works,"[182] as St. Paul said: "We see now by a glass in a dark sort."[183] For "the individual things of the world possess the features of their ultimate source and end."[184] Thus "the end of creation is that the world and the creatures may be the mirror and likeness of the work which the Beloved (God) has in Himself, and that this work may be known, loved and praised by angels and by men."[185] "God has indeed placed a reflection of Himself in all His creatures; they are all made to help us to realise some one at least of the attributes of Him who has all perfections essentially. God is light and life: He has made the sun to give light and life to all that breathes upon the earth. God governs the world: He has put the principle of authority even in mute nature, in the ants' nest and the herds of elephants, as a light for those of us who wish to see."[186] "A finite being is simply the imitation of the Divine essence in a certain measure, and not beyond."[187] For "the physical world, if we look at it from this standpoint, is but a faint and passing image of the Good, for it is neither

[182] Martindale, *The Sweet Singer of Israel*, p. 110.

[183] *I Cor.*, XIII, 12.

[184] Radhakrishnan, *Indian Philosophy*, I, p. 181.

[185] Llull, *The Tree of Love*, p. 111.

[186] Gnanaswamy, *Notes on Rebirth*, p. 11.

[187] Joyce, *Principles of Natural Theology*, p. 471.

changeless nor eternal, nor is it all-sufficing either in its parts or as a whole. Nor are our dream-worlds better off, save where a vision which has been vouchsafed to someone reveals the presence of the good which lies beyond."[188] "Who can look on nature and not see God?"[189] "Every creature in this visible world leads the minds of the wise and the contemplative towards God, for creatures are like the shadows, echoes and images of Him who is the first Cause, the Almighty, the all Wise, the all Good, the eternal source, the light, the fulness, the author, the example, and the ruler of all things; they are his footprints, the similitudes and signs presented to our eyes that in them we should see God."[190] Thus, St. John of the Cross addresses nature:

> "O woods and thickets planted by the hand of the Beloved!
> O meadow of verdure, enamelled with flowers! Say if He has passed by you.
> Scattering a thousand graces, He passed through these groves in haste,
> And, looking upon them as He went, left them, by his glance alone, clothed with beauty."[191]

In this wise the soul who possesses 'fish-eyes', without paying attention to the mirror, which is the means, is enchanted with the image of the Eternal Beauty reflected in it, which is the end for which the mirror exists. "It remembers naught save God, nor does it relish or understand anything but Him."[192] For, as the *Aṣṭāvakra Saṁhitā* says: "The world appears from the ignorance of the Self, and disappears from the knowledge of the Self, even as the snake appears from the non-cognition of

[188] Walker, *The Return to God*, pp. 152–153.

[189] St. Hilary, *In Psalmum LII*, 2: Migne, *P. L.*, IX, cols 325–326.

[190] St. Bonaventure, *Itinerarium Mentis in Deum*, c. II.

[191] St. John of the Cross, *Spiritual Canticle*, Stanzas 4 and 5, in Silverio-Allison Peers, *Complete Works*, II, p. 26.

[192] St. Albert the Great, *On Union with God*, p. 24.

the rope, and disappears with its recognition."[193] For, "once darkness (*i. e.* ignorance) is dispelled one only sees Unity."[194] "When thou hast begun to cleanse and purify thy soul of earthly images, and to unify and tranquillize thy heart and mind in God with loving confidence, to the end that thou mayest taste and enjoy in all the powers and torrents of His good pleasure and mayest fix thy will and intelligence in Him, then thou wilt no longer need to study and read the Holy Scriptures to learn the love of God and of thy neighbour, for the Holy Spirit Himself will teach thee."[195] Thus "the spiritual energy of those who refer everything to God and whose vision of the universe is centred in God only......will be harmonic and generating peace and joy. No wonder! They are dwelling in the harmonizing Truth."[196] For man was created for joy, and for nothing but joy, and for such joy as he has never experienced in this world, for eternal joy, for the same endless, supreme joy of God Himself. But in this life on earth his shortsightedness makes him commit an error of perspective. He sets his heart upon the tantalizing joys of this world: the beauty of a woman, the pleasure of the senses, the relaxation in laziness, the merriment of a night club, the activity of a dance, the effort of athletics, the pleasure of eating and drinking, even the thrill of scientific investigation. But such joys alone, even if they be licit, cannot satisfy the natural craving of the human heart: and if they are illicit, they leave behind them a painful sting. All this is the cause of disappointment and suffering, and the origin of the disillusion produced by the so-called 'evil of the world'. If one enjoys only the beauty and goodness of God reflected in the creation, his joy will be continuous and ever-waxing, without any feeling of frustration or pain. That will be the beginning of eternal bliss.

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[193] *Aṣṭāvakra Saṁhitā*, II, 7, p. 20.

[194] *Amṛtabindu Upaniṣad*, 15.

[195] St. Albert the Great, *op. cit.*, pp. 35–36.

[196] Lemaitre, *L'Amour du Vrai*, p. 59.

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This is the *jñāna* which we covet, the shining pearl to acquire which so many have given up whatever they possessed,[197] for it is "the foundation of all knowledge".[198] "The sense of unity has therefore been termed knowledge, *vidyā*; the sense of diversity ignorance, *avidyā*. But diversity is not false except when it is divorced from the sense of its true and eternal unity."[199] Thus by knowing God more and more, by attaching himself more and more to God, man will be able to escape the influence of *saṁsāra* more and more every day. "By knowing God one is released from all fetters."[200] "By meditating upon Him, by union with Him, and by entering into His Being more and more, there is finally cessation from every illusion."[201] All this will be equivalent to the acquisition of 'fish-eyes'. "By knowing the Knower......the God to be praised, by revering Him, one goes for ever to this peace."[202] "I think it is wrong to expect certainties in this world, where all else but God, that is Truth, is an uncertainty", says Mahātma Gandhi. "All that appears and happens about and around us is uncertain, transient. But there is a Supreme Being, hidden therein as Certainty, and one would be blessed if one could catch a glimpse of that Certainty and hitch one's waggon to It."[203]

By knowledge man identifies himself with the object of knowledge, as epistemology teaches. When truth unveils itself to the mind, the soul "begins to take the shape of truth."[204] "Knowledge leads to unity and ignorance to diversity."[205] By the acquisition of the knowledge of the Being, this poor

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[197] Cf. *Matth.*, XIII, 45-46.

[198] *Muṇḍaka Upaniṣad*, I, 1, 1.

[199] Aurobindo, *op. cit.*, p. 26.

[200] *Śvetāśvatara Upaniṣad*, I, 8 and 11.

[201] *Ibid.*, I, 10 (Hume, p. 396).

[202] *Kaṭha Upaniṣad*, I, 17.

[203] Gandhi, *The Story of my Experiments with Truth*, I, p. 582.

[204] St. Augustine, *De Doctrina Christiana*, I, 20, 19: Migne, *P. L.*, XXXIV, col. 26.

[205] Max Müller, *Ramakrishna*, p. 182.

becoming, which is called man, will participate more and more in the steadfastness of his Creator, thus avoiding the illusion produced by *saṁsāra*, though he will never escape *saṁsāra* itself, which is in his very nature. The portion of the flag which is nearer to the staff does not wave so much as its border which is always at the mercy of the wind. By the acquisition of 'fish-eyes' man becomes real man, still immersed in the world of becomings, yet participating in the steadiness of the Being. Wisdom deifies man. "He, verily, who knows that supreme Brahma, becomes very Brahma."[206] For, "we all, beholding the glory of the Lord with open face, are transformed into the same image from glory to glory."[207] It is that transformation into the Truth spoken of by St. Augustine.

[206] *Muṇḍaka Upaniṣad*, III, 2, 9.

[207] *II Cor.*, III, 18.

III

'FISH-EYES' AND SALVATION

The Proto-Indian inscription which has occasioned this study seems to connect the possession of 'fish-eyes' with the salvation of the soul after death, inasmuch as the man who had enjoyed this prerogative is supposed to be in a happy state after his death. Is there any real connexion between the possession of 'fish-eyes' and *mokṣa*?

Such is, indeed, the view of the ancient Indian *ṛṣis*, as well as of philosophers and saints in other nations and ages. Pratardana Daivodāsi once asked God Indra: "Do you yourself choose for me the one thing which you deem most beneficial to man." And Indra replied: "Know Me only; that is what I deem most beneficial for man, that he should know Me."[1] The reason of the great value of this knowledge of God is declared by Kṛṣṇa in the *Gītā*: "He who knoweth me, unborn, eternal, the Lord of Creation, is liberated from all sin, being undeluded."[2] Consequently the same Kṛṣṇa adds: "Even if you are the most sinful of all sinful men, you will cross over all trespasses by means of the boat of knowledge alone."[3] For this reason it is said in the *Book of Wisdom* that "all men are vain in whom there is not the knowledge of God."[4] Among these vain men, those all-powerful men, the giants of old, who did not acquire the knowledge of God, are counted by Holy Writ: "The Lord chose not them, neither did they find the way of knowledge [*jñāna-mārga*]; therefore did they perish. And because they had not wisdom [*vidyā*], they perished through

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[1] *Kauśītaki Upaniṣad*, III, 1.

[2] *Bhagavad Gītā*, X, 3.

[3] *Ibid.*, IV, 36.

[4] *Wisd.*, XIII, 1.

their folly [*avidyā*]."[5] The end of the two paths is therefore quite definite: *avidyā* leads to failure; *jñāna* and *vidyā* to salvation. "By ignorance they cross beyond death; by knowledge, they enjoy immortality."[6] "With the knowledge of God, all fetters fall off. With the waning of ignorance, birth and death cease."[7] "Realizing Him alone one overcomes death. There is no other path to emancipation."[8] The Chinese philosopher Chuang Tzū beautifully explains the working of this knowledge leading to the Immortal: "He who knows what God is and knows what man is, has attained. Knowing what God is, he knows that he himself proceeded therefrom. Knowing what man is, he rests in the knowledge of the known, waiting for the knowledge of the unknown."[9]

It is therefore evident that the path of knowledge, the possession of 'fish-eyes', will lead man to immortality. In fact this seems to be the only path to liberation. But how? What will the process be? What the steps along this path? These questions are the more natural, for the oneness of this path seems at times to be contradicted by other authors. Swāmi Śivānanda, for instance, interpreting the Vedāntic doctrine, says: "There is no virtue higher than love, there is no treasure higher than love, there is no *dharma* higher than love, because love is Truth. Love is God."[10] "Vain are all things and of no account, except to love God."[11] Christian asceticism also acknowledges the superiority of love, otherwise called charity, above all other virtues, since "perfection has no other end but charity which unites us with God."[12] And thus St. Paul recommends: "Above all these things have charity which is

[5] *Baruch*, III, 27–28.

[6] *Īśa Upaniṣad*, 11; *Maitri Upaniṣad*, VII, 9.

[7] *Śvetāśvatara Upaniṣad*, I, 11,

[8] *Ibid.*, VI, 15.

[9] Giles, *Confucianism and its Rivals*, pp. 133–134.

[10] Sivānanda, *Bhakti and Sankirtan*, p. 32.

[11] Prabhavānanda, *Śrimad Bhāgavatam*, p. 15.

[12] St. Albert the Great, *On Union with God*, p. 15.

the bond of perfection."[13] For "if I speak with the tongues of men and of angels and have not charity, I am become as sounding brass, or a tinkling cymbal."[14] In point of fact, as Vallabha says: "The love for the Lord is essentially needed if one wants to achieve real and everlasting fruit."[15] For other virtues are good in themselves and bear fruit within their own limited circle, but "charity buildeth up"[16] the edifice of man's sanctity and consequently purifies man's intention and gives the increase to all human seeds. For "charity is the root of all good things,"[17] as it is "the fulfilling of the law".[18] Thus it is that "the love of the Lord saves all,"[19] as we read in Sikh scriptures. Are therefore knowledge and love two different paths? Or how may these two opinions be combined and understood?

The question of the salvation of man, otherwise called final emancipation or liberation, is undoubtedly a question of extraordinary practical importance. To obtain this final end of man practical steps should be taken. Now if we consider the nature of knowledge, the enlightenment of the mind is only of a definite speculative character in itself.[20] There is no achievement of a practical nature in this mental operation. Yet knowledge leads to another mental operation which is of great practical importance, namely, love. Love cannot exist without knowledge, for man's will is blind of itself, and requires consequently a light which is supplied by the intellect: knowledge is this light. Now the object of the intellect is Truth, while the object of the will is Goodness. But these are only two aspects of Being, two

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[13] *Coloss.*, III, 14.

[14] *I Cor.*, XIII, 1.

[15] Shah, *A Primer of Aṇu-Bhāshya*, p. 242.

[16] *I Cor.*, VIII, 1.

[17] St. Robert Bellarmine, *De AEterna Felicitate Sanctorum*, I, 8 (*Opuscula Ascetica*, I, p. 378).

[18] I John, XIII, 10.

[19] *The Ādi Granth*, Rāg Asā, V, 86 (152), 3.

[20] Cf. Aristotle, *Metaphysics*, I, 2, 4.

facets of the same One diamond which reflects its unborn light upon the whole universe. The intellect points this light to the will, and the will realizing its goodness naturally and without effort issues forth its love which spreads in cataracts of practical activity. And when this goodness embraced by love happens to be the *Summum Bonum*, "the Supreme Good"[21], the *niḥśreyasa* of the *Gītā*,[22] the human will is forcibly and irresistibly moved to love it and embrace it, as in no other case may ever happen; for "one should think that except Brahman nothing is true, and therefore nothing except It should be dear."[23] When seeing goodnesses of this world we may be deceived because they are always defective and because of the imperfection of our perceptions, and we may not love them; but when attaining the true real knowledge of the Supreme Goodness, we shall not be free to love it or not. "This is a matter, then, of necessity—'we *must* love'........If we see it we cannot but love it."[24] It has therefore been said that "to know God is to love Him."[25]

Rightly therefore Prof. Suryanarayana Sastri thinks that when ancient Indian philosophers lay stress on the importance of *jñāna* to obtain salvation they include love in it, as the necessary result of knowledge. "The emphasis on knowledge as the sole means to realization, therefore, supposes also the love rising from that knowledge."[26] For "that Self is dearer than a son, is dearer than wealth, is dearer than all else."[27] That is the reason why St. John emphatically says: "He that loveth not, knoweth not God; for God is charity."[28] Which is

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[21] *Śrīmad Bhāgavatam*, I, 1, 2; and *passim*.

[22] *Bhagavad Gītā*, V, 2.

[23] Vallabha, *Aṇu Bhāṣya*, p. 241.

[24] Turner, *The Nature of the Deity*, p. 244.

[25] St. Alphonsus Rodríguez, *The Union and Transformation of the Soul in God*, ch. XIX. Cf. Saudreau, *The Life of Union with God*, p. 264.

[26] Sastri, "Jnānād Eva Tu Kaivalyam", *The Philosophical Quarterly* XVII, pp. 141–142.

[27] *Bṛhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad*, I, 4, 8.

[28] *I John*, IV, 8.

also said in the *Śrīmad Bhāgavatam:* "Fruitless is that knowledge which is not love."[29] And consequently the clearer knowledge is, the more fervent love will be; so that St. Paul could write to his *śiṣyas:* "And this I pray, that your charity may more and more abound in knowledge and in all understanding."[30] As an oil lamp is fed with oil; and when a few drops of oil only remain in the lamp, the flame is reduced and flickers and quivers, threatening to vanish, but as soon as fresh oil is poured the flame rises and shines, and the more oil you pour the brighter it grows; even so the clearer the knowledge you have of God, the more fervent will your love of God burn within your heart. But even this new pouring of oil cannot be performed without the light of the flame; in the same way love opens new vistas to the understanding, and imparts new and more powerful insight to it, to know the mysteries of the Godhead, according to what St. Thomas says: "It is charity which causes the enlightenment of the heart."[31] So, the intellect illumines the will; and love strengthens the vision; and this new powerful vision enlightens the will, to love more fervently; and thus the two faculties help each other endlessly to approach the source of all light and power which is the supreme Truth-Goodness of the Universe. Thus knowledge and love are not two different paths: *jñāna-mārga* is not to be separated from *bhakti-mārga*. They are one and the same. "That the Way of Gnosis and the Way of Participation have one and the same end becomes evident when we consider that love and knowledge can only be conceived of as perfected in an identity of lover and beloved, known and unknown."[32]

This love, which spontaneously grows in the soul of man, when he considers the goodness of *Saccidānanda* is called *prema*,

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[29] *Śrīmad Bhāgavatam,* I, 2, 6.

[30] *Philip.,* I, 9.

[31] St. Thomas Aquinas, Opusculum IV: *De Duobus Praeceptis,* ch. II.

[32] Coomaraswamy, "On the Pertinence of Philosophy", in Radhakrishnan-Muirhead, *op. cit.,* p. 123, note.

and it contains three phases of development, as explained by Vallabhācārya.[33] The first phase is called *rāgavināśa*, the destruction of *rāga* which is that triple concupiscence against which St. John warns us. "For all that is in the world is the concupiscence of the flesh, and the concupiscence of the eyes, and the pride of life."[34] When *prema* arises, worldly *rāga* is destroyed, for "the whole world-illusion will be stopped (*viśva māyā nivṛttih*) by a true knowledge of the One God."[35] Hence Vallabha warns us that "as a preliminary condition of the attainment of *bhakti*, it is essential that the bonds of worldly life must be cut. Without this, love for Brahman does not arise."[36] Which is also acknowledged by Śri Aurobindo: "The disorders of life and mind cease by discerning the secret of a more perfect order than the physical."[37] Such is the first negative effect of love, for one cannot love God and the world which are enemies. "No man can serve two masters," we read in the Gospels; "for either he will hate the one, and love the other; or he will sustain the one, and despise the other."[38] Consequently St. John said: "Love not the world. If any man love the world, the charity of the Father is not in him."[39]

The destruction of the world is a kind of holocaust upon the altar of the love of God; and a holocaust does not spare any part of the sacrifice; it is a *sarvamedha*. "The essence of love is an appreciation of the goodness of the person loved, so great that we desire to surrender the whole of ourselves to him, keeping nothing back and asking nothing in return."[40] Now, the egoistic element is essentially intermingled and blent with

[33] Vallabhā, *Bhakti-Vardhani Grantha*, 3–9; *Nirodha-Laxana Grantha*, 9–18; *Seva Falam*, 1–7.

[34] *I John*, II, 2.

[35] *Śvetāśvatara Upaniṣad*, I, 10.

[36] Vallabha, *Aṇu Bhāṣya*, pp. 240–241.

[37] Aurobindo, *The Life Divine*, I, p. 68.

[38] *Matth.*, VI, 24.

[39] *I John.*, II, 15.

[40] Stewart, *The Inward Vision*, p. 20.

the spirit of the world. "The concupiscence of the flesh, and the concupiscence of the eyes and the pride of life" are not mere theoretical elements, mythical postulates—something in the air, as it were; but they are real, actual things appertaining to the body of man and to his base passions and inclinations. They are man's ego. They are the 'I' and the 'mine' which, accordingly, our love of God must destroy thoroughly if it is what it ought to be. "That man who puts off all desire, and walks without longing, knowing that 'mine' and 'I' are naught, he comes to peace. This, O son of Prithā, is the Brahma state; attaining this none is deluded."[41] For "they who know Him have left the body behind."[42] "Egoism is the product of *avidyā*."[43] *Ahankāra* is the greatest enemy of God. Man must therefore acquire an habitual forgetfulness of self. The Muslim mystic al Hallāj declares this principle with marvellous precision: "When the Truth has laid hold of a heart, it empties it of all that is not Itself."[44] That is the reason why the destruction of attachment to the things of the world is attributed by many Indian thinkers to knowledge: "By true *jñāna* freedom is attained: as the darkness flies away before light, so *ajñāna* vanishes and with it *bandhana* (attachment), and freedom is attained."[45] But this destruction of attachment is actually done by love. For "divine love does not allow any rivulet separated from it, which would decrease the main current."[46] Consequently "he loves God with all his heart who so puts his affection and his service totally in God as not to have any particle of his faculty and capacity of love that does not tend to God."[47] Such a one will never enter into deliberation

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[41] *Bhagavad Gītā*, II, 71-72.

[42] *Śvetāśvatara Upaniṣad*, V, 4.

[43] Sivananda Saraswati, *The Ten Upanishads*, p. 113.

[44] Massignon, *La passion d'al Hosayn-ibn-Mansoūr al Hallāj, martyr mystique de l' Islam*, I, p. 125.

[45] *Siva-Jñāna-Siddhiyar*, VIII, 27.

[46] St. Augustine, *De Doctrina Christiana*, I, 22: Migne, *P. L.*, XXXIV, col. 27.

[47] Surin, *Questions importantes a la Vie Spirituelle*, p. 2.

whether to commit a sinful action or not. "He who acteth, placing all actions in Brahma, abandoning attachment, is unpolluted by sin as is a lotus-leaf by water; so no sinful deed adheres to one who knows this."[48] By this total destruction of his selfishness, the grace of God places man on the plane of absolute Reality, on the only plane where the fleeting nature of man will find steadiness and rest. For "the world passeth away, and the concupiscence thereof; but he that doeth the will of God abideth for ever."[49]

Because this first stage is not negative only; there is a positive element in it. For while *prema* destroys all *rāga*, it inclines the heart towards God in such a way as to become completely attached to Him and absorbed in Him. *Prema* has transformed world-consciousness into God-consciousness. *Saccidānanda vijñāna* reigns supreme in the heart of the lover. O divine transformation which God only may work by the sweet influence of His grace! By it man always sees the divine presence of God within his soul, who is the heavenly *antaryāmin*, the dweller within the lotus *mahāl* of our heart, who comes there because, as befits a true lover, he wants to be as near as possible to the beloved. And since "no word shall be impossible with God,"[50] for "His desires are infallible,"[51] He does what no other lover has ever done: indwelling within the soul of the beloved.

There the soul, after she has been transfigured by the light of grace, sees her divine Lover, the silent witness of all her actions, not by virtue of the natural light of reason, but in His own Light, the Light by which He is self-illuminating, for His life is "the Light of men".[52] At the splendour of this Light, she will see the Self-subsisting Light of the Universe

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[48] *Bhagavad Gītā*, V, 10.

[49] *I John*, II, 17.

[50] *Luke*, I, 37.

[51] Śaṅkara, *Cāndogya Upaniṣad Bhāṣya*, VIII, 1, 5.

[52] *John*, I, 4.

(*svaprakāśa*), "the Father of lights"[53]; "after Him, as He shines, doth everything shine, this whole world is illumined with His light."[54] The soul seeing this light is irresistibly drawn to it as a moth is attracted to the flame. She, a piteous creature in the days of her misery, was attracted by, and attached to, the world, shining and inviting. But it was only an appearance. In the glow of that Light everything in the world is seen to be darkness. Consequently she will have one wish only, and that will be the pursuit of the greater glory of God. A soul who reached this stage once said: "With my mind absorbed in the bliss of singing Thy glory, O Supreme Lord, I fear not the dreadful river of existence, difficult to cross; but I feel sorry for the pitiable condition of those perverted souls who labour under the dead weight of the world, tempted by the illusions of sensual enjoyment."[55] Such a happy soul will have no other will than the will of the Lord, and will always strive to fulfil all His wishes according to that text of St. John: "And this is charity, that we walk according to His commandments."[56] And again: "For this is the charity of God, that we keep His commandments."[57] Jesus Christ himself had said: "If you love me, keep my commandments."[58]

The power of this great Light within himself has brought the lover to the second phase of his *prema*. The latter has become *āsakti*, attachment to God, and to God only. How can anything else be loved by one who is attached to Him who is the One Lovable in the whole universe? Has He not Himself said: "He that loveth father or mother more than Me is not worthy of Me"?[59] "In this world," says Tukārām, "we like

[53] *Jac.*, I, 17.

[54] *Katha Upaniṣad*, V, 15.

[55] *Śrīmad Bhāgavatam*, VII, 9, 43.

[56] *I John*, II, 6.

[57] *Ibid.*, V, 3.

[58] *John*, XIV, 15.

[59] *Matth.*, X, 37.

nothing else excepting one God. My mind is disgusted from this worldly life, since my mind is always filled with love. Gold, silver and wealth are like a clod of earth. Rubies are like stone pebbles. Tuka says: Women will appear to me as bears."[60] The *āsaktin* having God next to His heart loves all, including his own family, through God's love only. Otherwise his family is eliminated from his own heart[61]. Very wisely did Yājñavalkya explain this to his wife Maitreyī: "Lo, verily, not for the love of the husband is a husband dear, but for the love of the Ātman a husband is dear. Not for the love of the wife is a wife dear, but for the love of the Ātman a wife is dear. Not for the love of the sons are the sons dear, but for the love of the Ātman sons are dear."[62] If thou lovest God in this way, "He shall be thy life, meat, clothing, house, honour, wealth, pleasure and thy all."[63] In this stage the lover fully obeys that request of God in the *Book of Proverbs:* "Son, give me thy heart"[64], and accordingly the lover becomes one with his beloved: "He who loves God is identified with God, in so far as the infinite and the finite can be identified. God becomes another 'us', we another God. Much more than union, it is a transformation and even identity."[65] In this sense Kṛṣṇa is said to be 'the master thief', because he steals away the hearts of his devotees unfastening therewith the knot of the heart (*hṛdaya-granthi*) by ending all their wishes and desires.

From this second phase, *prema* naturally passes to the third, *vyasana*, in which the soul cannot remain even an instant without His presence. It was the stage in which the beloved of Holy Writ found herself when she sang: "I sat down under his shadow, whom I desired: and his fruit was sweet to my

[60] Tukārām, *Abhangāchī Gāthā*, Abhanga 88, p. 14.
[61] Cf. Parekh, *Sri Vallabhācharya. Life, Teachings and Movement*, p. 242.
[62] *Bṛhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad*, II, 4, 5.
[63] St. Robert Bellarmine, *The Ascent of the Mind to God*, p. 30
[64] *Prov.*, XXIII, 261.
[65] *Seraphinus, seu Schola Sancti Amoris*, l. II, cons. 29, p. 120.

palate. He brought me into the cellar of wine, he set in order charity in me. Stay me up with flowers, compass me about with apples: because I languish with love............My beloved to me, and I to Him, who feedeth among the lilies."[66] O divine embrace of lover and beloved, of God and the human soul, which annihilates all other recollections of the human mind, all other desires of the human heart; which produces a complete oblivion of the world, a total *tyāga* or abandonment of, and detachment from, whatever is *kṣara* or perishable. For "as a man when in the embrace of a beloved wife, knows nothing within and without; so this person when in the embrace of the Intelligent Self knows nothing within and without. Verily that is his true form in which his desire is satisfied, in which the Self is his desire, in which he is without desire and without sorrow."[67] For being so intimately united with the One, who being Infinite Riches cannot have any desire, how can he entertain any desire himself? "He who knows the Truth, the Knowledge, the Infinity that is Brahman, shall enjoy with the all-wise Brahman all objects of desire."[68] Man shall then realize that God "is our only Beloved, and we should adore Him devoid of all thoughts of fear. A man loves God only when he has no other desire, when he thinks of nothing else, and when he is mad after Him. That love which a man has for his beloved can illustrate the love we ought to have for God."[69] "He is like a love-sick man, whose mind is never free from his love for a certain woman and grows in it whether sitting or rising, both when eating and drinking—greater even than this must be the love of God in the heart of His lovers who continually grow more fervent, as He commanded us: 'with all thy heart and

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[66] *Cant.*, II, 3–6, 16.

[67] *Bṛhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad*, IV, 3, 21.

[68] *Taittirīya Upaniṣad*, II, 1.

[69] Vivekananda, *Bhakti* in *Complete Works*, III, p. 693.

with all thy soul'."[70] "When all the desires hiding in the heart are loosed, then the mortal becomes immortal; here he enjoys Brahman."[71]

This is a state of love most perfect and pure, a love which excludes all self-love, for the soul does not love God for her own sake, but for the sake of God; and one's own self is not dear any more but for the sake of God. This is perfect *nirodha*, the complete loss of the self and of everything in God, wherein he finds it once more purified, spiritualized, in a transcended world, which made St. Francis of Assisi exclaim: "My God and my all."[72] For "as all the spokes are held together in the hub and felly of a wheel, just so in this *Ātman* all things, all *devas*, all worlds, all breathing things, all *ātmans* are held together."[73] Thus then man loves God in everything and everything in God. "When a person loves the Lord, the whole universe becomes dear to him, because it is all his."[74] Just as selfishness excludes everything from the heart, the love of God includes everything, for He is 'all full' (*Paripūrṇa*)[75]. For as "God may be all in all",[76] "in God all else is perceived."[77] About those who have reached this stage Kṛṣṇa says: "To those who, always centred upon the Absolute, worship me by love, I give this enlightening and unifying grace, by which they come unto me."[78] The soul will thus realize that there is nothing of her own in this love, but all purely caused by God Himself, for "the cause of loving

[70] Maimonides, *Yad*, Teshubah X, 1–3, in Cohen, *The Teachings of Maimonides*, pp. 113–114.

[71] *Bṛhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad*, IV, 4, 7.

[72] Le Monnier, *Histoire de St. Francois*, I, p. 67; Joergensen, *Saint Francois d'Assise, sa vie et son oeuvre*, p. 91.

[73] *Bṛhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad*, II, 5, 15.

[74] Vivekananda, *Bhakti-Yoga*, p. 92.

[75] Sivananda Saraswati, *The Ten Upanishads*, p. 63.

[76] *I Cor.*, XV, 28.

[77] D'Arcy, "The Philosophy of St. Augustine", in *A Monument to St. Augustine*, p. 174.

[78] *Bhagavad Gītā*, X, 10.

God is God", says St. Bernard. "I spoke truly; for he is both the efficient and the final cause. He gives the occasion, He creates the affection. He consummates the desire. He wrought that he might be loved; He is the object of hope, to be loved more blissfully, that He may not be loved in vain. His love both prepares and rewards ours."[79]

This transformation of the lover into the beloved, which is the work of the latter, is the cause of all the power and strength which the human soul, in spite of her weakness, is endowed with to stand and endure all sorts of trials for the beloved, as all those who have analyzed the essence of love tell us. "Love is as strong as death,"[80] we read in the *Canticle of Canticles.* In fact "there are no arms as strong as those of love, not only to embrace, but to overcome."[81] "Nothing can resist love. God himself cannot resist it, neither can soul. To live without love is to vegetate in oneself. Love is itself an apostleship, and the condition of all apostleship, and the power of all apostleship. It makes everything possible."[82] For "charity is patient, is kind; charity envieth not, dealeth not perversely; is not puffed up; is not ambitious, seeketh not her own, is not provoked to anger, thinketh no evil; rejoiceth not in iniquity, but rejoiceth with the Truth; beareth all things, believeth all things, hopeth all things, endureth all things."[83] Which is beautifully explained by Fr. Luis de Granada, O. P.: "The Love of God is like honey. It is sweet itself; but besides, it sweetens the tasteless or even the bitter things with which it is mingled. It sheds such an abundant joy upon all the troubles and miseries of life that they are thereby transformed into genuine pleasures."[84]

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[79] St. Bernard, *On the Love of God,* p. 85.

[80] *Cant.,* VIII, 6.

[81] Osuna, *The Third Spiritual Alphabet,* p. 316.

[82] Monahan, *Life and Letters of Janet Erskine Stuart,* p. 168.

[83] *I Cor.,* XIII, 4–7.

[84] Granada, *Guia de Pecadores,* l. I, ch. XVI.

Indian philosophers call this final stage of divine love *sarva-ātmabhāva*, which is a formal participation in God, when the poor human heart feels the thrill of the Infinite Ānanda of God reflecting Itself in all and everything. "By knowing the Knower..... ...., the God to be praised, (and) by revering Him, one goes for ever to this peace."[85] Such is the *mokṣa* of this world; such is the imperfect *nibbāna* spoken of by the Buddha,[86] for it is the real *paramasukha* or "supreme happiness" in this world;[87] such is that state of perfect contemplation which according to St. Thomas Aquinas "is the very essence of future beatitude."[88]

In this state of heavenly bliss experienced in this world, man, in perfect union with God, having no human thoughts and aspirations, but those of God Himself, will perform all his actions in union with, and for the love of, the Lord, according to that advice of St. Paul: "Let all your things be done in charity."[89] His deeds will never stain the purity of that soul with earthly affections or temporal ambitions; but on the contrary all of them will be stamped with the seal of divine love, as is beautifully explained by the Mediaeval English mystic Richard Rolle: "Man is not holier or higher for the outer works that he does. Truly God that is the beholder of the heart regards the will more than the deed. The deeds truly hang on the will, not the will on the deeds. For the more burningly that a man loves, in so mickle he ascends to a higher reward."[90] This reward is liberation, the final *mokṣa*, the supreme *nirvāṇa*, the perfect *kaivalya*. That is the reason why Yājñavalkya

[85] *Kaṭha Upaniṣad*, I, 17.

[86] *Digha Nikāya*, II, "Mahāparinibbāna Suttanta", p. 153; III, "Udambarika Suttanta", pp. 55–56; *Majjhima Nikāya*, I, "Mahā Sihanāda Sutta", p. 71; *Aṅguttara Nikāya*, III, 6, 55, etc. Cf. Keny, "Was the Buddha a Theist", *I H. Q.*, XX (1944), p. 324.

[87] Cf. *Dhammapada*, 203.

[88] St. Thomas Aquinas, *Summa Theologica*, 1a IIae, q. 69, a. 3, *in corp.*

[89] *I Cor.*, XVI, 14.

[90] Knowles, *The English Mystics*, p. 85.

attributed this final result to knowledge: "Verily, O Gārgī, he who departs from this world without knowing that Imperishable is pitiable. But, O Gārgī, he who departs from this world knowing that Imperishable is a Brāhmaṇa."[91] For "without understanding the real nature of Brahman, the highest purpose of men cannot be fulfilled."[92] That is the reason why Ṣeneca said: "The good philosopher is different from God only in time,"[93] for he will enjoy the peaceful continuity of the vision of Truth, but envisaged from the depths of successive time.

Jñāna-mārga is therefore the real path that leads to *svarga*; one cannot take any other path leading to God. "There is no other way leading unto Him other than knowledge."[94] For "intense love towards God or *peravā* is the consummation of thought."[95] In the same way, as Śaṅkara explains, as "an inhabitant of the region of Benares who wishes to reach Hardwar does not travel eastward"[96], so one who wants to go to God will not take any other way than the way of knowledge. "He who abides therein even at the hour of death passes to the calm of Brahman."[97]

In order to emphasize this psychological succession of functions we have said that love follows the knowledge of the Good necessarily, irresistibly, forcibly. Yet during this life on earth man has to reckon with another factor which is essentially included in his will; that is his freedom. The will of man is never uncontrollably led to any object, not even to God, precisely because during our lifetime our knowledge of God is never perfect. "We see now through a glass in a dark manner," graphically says St. Paul, but in heaven we shall see God "face to face."[98] Therefore during this period of dark vision

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[91] *Bṛhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad*, III, 8, 10.
[92] Śaṅkara, *Cāndogya Upaniṣad Bhāṣya*, VIII, Introd.
[93] Seneca, *De Providentia*, I, 5. Cf. *De Clementia*, II, 5.
[94] *Taittirīya Upaniṣad*, III, 1–6.
[95] Srinivasachari, *The Philosophy of Viśiṣṭādvaita*, p. 440.
[96] Śaṅkara, *Bṛhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad Bhāṣya*, IV, 4, 22.
[97] *Śrīmad Bhāgavatam*, V, 18, 9.
[98] *I Cor.*, XIII, 72.

man is free to follow the lead of the knowledge, and naturally if he does not follow it, he is the more responsible. That is the reason why the *Īśa Upaniṣad* ominously says: "Into a blind darkness (*andhaṁ tamaḥ*) they enter who follow after ignorance; they enter as if into a greater darkness (*bhūya tamo*) who devote themselves to knowledge alone (*u vidyāyām ratāḥ*)."[99] 'Blind darkness' is the opposite of God, who is Light and the Father of lights. To go into a blind darkness is equivalent to missing the final end for which man was created, which is God Himself[100]; and that is the destination of those who

[99] *Īśa Upaniṣad*, 9; *Bṛhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad*, IV, 4 10.

[100] This world of blind darkness is described in the same Upaniṣad as follows: "Sunless (*asūryā*) are those worlds and enveloped in blind darkness where all go at the time of death, who are the slayers of their souls." (*Ibid.*, 3); which description is understood by Śrī Veṅkaṭanātha of "the most frightening worlds named Naraka......permeated by intense darkness......bereft of all light" (*Bhāṣya*, Tirupati ed., p. 7). The idea of deep darkness existing in hell is traditional in India from the time of the *Ṛgveda*: the wicked are cast into "the abyss, in endless darkness" (*Ṛg.*, VII, 104, 3), "the undermost darkness" (*Ibid.*, X, 152, 4), "black darkness" (*Ath*, V, 30, 11) and "blinding darkness" (*Ibid.*, XVIII, 3, 3). This denomination is also usual in the Upaniṣadic period. Thus,

"Joyless are those worlds called
Covered with blind darkness;
To them after death go those
People who have not knowledge"

(*Bṛhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad*, IV, 4, 11).

The *Avesta* also uses the same denomination: "In life he is not just, in death he was no part in Paradise; he comes to the place of the wicked, the dark, the darkest, to darkness." (*Vendīdād*, V, 61–62). Holy Writ describes hell in the same way: the damned are cast "into utter darkness" (*Math.*, XXII, 13), for they are defined as "wandering stars to whom the storm of darkness is reserved for ever." (*Jude*, I, 13). Consequently an ascetical author concludes: "How sorrowful and unhappy will that hour be to the wicked, when they shall be sent away to be buried in eternal darkness, where neither the uncreated nor created sun shall ever shine!" (St. Robert Bellarmine, *The Ascent of the Mind to God*, VII, 1, pp. 122–123). This darkness is, according to Śrī Aurobindo, 'self-obscuration' (*Isha Upanishad Analysis*, p. 88), since, as explained by the Chinese, it is "opposed to reason", (Feer, *L'Enfer Indien*, pp. 3–4), because "from the wicked their light shall be taken away", (*Job.*, XXXVIII, 15), since "those who are evil-doers, whose minds are not peaceful, can never see the Light." (*Katha Upaniṣad*, II, 24).

do not cultivate knowledge; but those who, after acquiring knowledge, have no courage to take the consequences of this knowledge, "those who cultivate knowledge alone", will go even into a greater darkness. For "there is no excuse for them; although they had the knowledge of God they did not honour Him or give thanks to Him as God; they became fantastic in their notions and their senseless hearts grew benighted; they who claimed to be so wise, turned fools."[101] What would therefore be missing in their case? What is man expected to add himself after having acquired knowledge?

We have said in the beginning of this chapter that just as knowledge is speculative, love is practical and operative. Real love is the generator of works for the beloved, and the harder these works are, the greater is his joy in rendering honour to the beloved through them. There have been in Indian Philosophy and Asceticism some misleading tendencies concerning this point. Some, while emphasizing the excellence and importance of *jñāna-mārga*, have overlooked the practical side of life and condemned all works. It was something similar to the school of the Quietists founded by Molinos in Europe towards the close of the 17th century.

Yet the importance of works in the spiritual life of man was well emphasized in India even in the Vedic period. Says the *Muṇḍaka Upaniṣad:* "Works (*karman*) and brooding (*tapas*) and Brahma are beyond death"[102]; which is to say that the result of brooding or meditation and works, that is knowledge and virtuous merits, endure after death, according to that famous statement of Yājñavalkya to Jāratkārava Ārtabhāga: After death "one becomes good by good *karma* (works)."[103] The importance of works is therefore properly brought out by equating them with knowledge, and with Brahma Himself, to

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[101] *Rom.*, I, 21–22.

[102] *Muṇḍaka Upaniṣad*, II, 1, 10. Cf. Bhartṛhari, *Nīti Śataka*, śl. 99.

[103] *Bṛhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad*, III, 2, 13.

whom both lead; and then the Upaniṣad adds: "He who knows that........rends asunder the knot of ignorance"[104], which is an Upaniṣadic *mahāvākya* concerning the path of liberation. This statement of the *Muṇḍaka* is therefore a sort of proclamation of faith in the eschatological value of good works, a doctrine which is traditional in India, especially after the spread of the influence derived from the *Bhagavad Gītā*.

The *Gītā* indeed may rightly be entitled "the Gospel of *karma*." The whole conversation of Kṛṣṇa tends to disclose to Arjuna that knowledge and *bhakti* alone cannot save man. Action is a law of nature; nobody, even for an instant, remains doing nothing. "For works are better than no works; not even thy body can win its sustenance from no-work."[105] Consequently life means action. And this action must be informed by the knowledge that precedes it, for work alone without this information by knowledge is not of any value. "If in constant practice," says Kṛṣṇa to Arjuna, "thou lackest strength, make work for me thine aim; if thou but doest work for me, thou shalt attain perfection."[106] According to the *Gītā* three kinds of works must be performed: First, *kāryam karma*, "duty works"[107]; second, *dharma karma*, that is, works enjoined by any religions and moral law[108]; third, *niyatam karma*, actions enjoined by any duly constituted authority.[109] Very wisely therefore the *Gītā* has been styled "the Gospel of knowledge applied to activity."[110]

All Vedāntists and great philosophers have likewise propounded the need of works as an indispensable complement to knowledge. For Mādhva, for instance, "it is true that the

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[104] *Muṇḍaka Upaniṣad, loc. cit.*
[105] *Bhagavad Gītā,* III, 8.
[106] *Ibid.,* XII, 10.
[107] *Ibid.,* VI, 1; XVIII, 9
[108] *Ibid.,* III, 35; IX, 2; XVIII, 45–48.
[109] *Ibid.,* III, 8; XVIII, 7, 23.
[110] Sircar, *Mysticism in Bhagavat Gītā,* p. 27.

only road to salvation is the knowledge of God. But this knowledge cannot be obtained by a man defiled with sin. To remove the obstacle which sin places in the way of *Brahma-jñāna* we must perform *karma* without any hope of gain and purely for duty's sake. When the heart is thus purified of all self-seeking, the knowledge of God spontaneously arises in it."[111] Similarly Vallabhācārya admits that *jñāna kānda* is superior to *karma kānda*, but in any case the latter is always necessary.[112] Accordingly Vasiṣṭha recommends: "Be a *mahā-kartā* (great doer), *mahā-bhoktā* (great enjoyer) and *mahā-tyāgin* (great renouncer)"[113]; and Vanamālī Miśra affirms that "all such actions as may please God are regarded as producing virtue."[114]

None other is the orthodox Christian doctrine. Thus St. James says: "Be ye doers of the word, and not hearers only, deceiving your own selves. For if a man be a hearer of the word, and not a doer, he shall be compared to a man beholding his own countenance in a glass. For he beheld himself, and went his way, and presently forgot what manner of man he was."[115] The performance of works must therefore be undertaken as a sort of endless prayer to God who deserves all praise from us, his children. "Let us prepare ourselves then," says St. Augustine, "for that time of perfect praise by praising God here by our own works."[116] Accordingly the formula of perfection bequeathed by St. Benedict to his monks is symbolized in those two words which are sacred to Christian asceticism; *Ora et labora*, "Pray and work."[117] This work of the ascetic in this

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[111] Siqueira, "The Mysticism of the Isa Upanishad", *The New Review*, I, p. 582.

[112] Parekh, *Sri Vallabhacharya*, p. 236.

[113] *Yoga-Vāsiṣṭha*, VIa, 115, 1. Cf. Ātreya, *The Philosophy of the Yoga-Vāsiṣṭha*, p. 513.

[114] Dasgupta, *A History of Indian Philosophy*, III, p. 441.

[115] *James*, I, 22–24.

[116] Pope, *The Teaching of St. Augustine*, p. 53.

[117] Marmion, *Le Christ, Ideal du Moine*, p. 92. Cf. McCann, *Saint Benedict*, pp. 969102.

world is considered to be a sort of foretaste of the active life of loving God that the Saints enjoy in heaven, as signified by St. Thomas Aquinas when he explained that the happiness of the active life disposes us to future beatitude.[118]

There is a famous passage in the *Bhagavad Gītā*, which is a stumbling block to many interpreters, because they lose sight of the main purpose of the whole work, which is the injunction of works. This passage declares with a wonderful lucidity the hierarchical gradation of all the spiritual and material activity of man in relation to his works. It runs as follows: "Better is knowledge than constant practice; and than knowledge meditation is more excellent; than meditation, abandonment of the fruit of work; after abandonment, peace ensues."[119] Works —'constant practice' (*abhyāsat*)—are supposed to be in every term of these comparisons, for they are the substratum of the whole asceticism of the *Gītā;* and in this individual text, in one of the comparisons—'abandonment of the fruit of work'— works are specifically mentioned. Consequently works are always presupposed. The lower degree of perfection therefore is 'works alone'; better than this are works informed by knowledge; better still, works informed by knowledge derived from meditation (*dhyāna*); far better, works informed by knowledge derived from meditation and purified by abandonment of the fruit of work, *i.e.* total detachment. It is, as it were, an allegory of a tree, the tree of *karma*, or works. The branch that naturally grows from such a tree without any grafting produces no good fruits at all; when a branch is informed by the knowledge of God, it is already fruitful; much better fruit is borne by a branch informed by knowledge derived from meditation, for such knowledge is more deeply rooted; but the fruits are much more luxuriant, if besides all these qualities the virtue of detachment is grafted to the branch. This detachment

[118] St. Thomas Aquinas, *Summa Theologica*, I^{a} II^{ae}, q. 5, a. 6, *in corp.*

[119] *Bhagavad Gītā*, XII, 12.

is absolutely necessary if the tree is to bear truly good fruit, "depending not on the fruit of work"[120]; "with abandonment of attachment and of fruit"[121]. Thus works alone are very low but *śreyo hi jñānam abhyāsat; jñānāt dhyānam viśiṣyate; jñānāt karmaphalatyāgaḥ śreyaḥ.* "At its top they say the fig is luscious: none gaineth it who knoweth not the Father."[122]

A very striking example of such *karma*, influenced by the knowledge of God, with total detachment from the fruit of work, is given in a biblical text of the Old Testament and explained in the New Testament. God had promised his servant Abraham that he would be made the father of a numberless nation; his only issue then was Isaac out of whom this nation had to spring. And yet one day God again called Abraham and ordered him: "Take thy only begotten son Isaac, whom thou lovest, and go into the land of vision; and there thou shalt offer him for an holocaust upon one of the mountains which I will shew thee." Without delay Abraham did as he had been commanded, and when he was ready to strike the death-blow upon his son's head, God summoned him once more and said: "Lay not thy hand upon the boy, neither do thou anything to him; now I know that thou fearest God, and hast not spared thy only begotten son for my sake."[123] The promise of God had to be fulfilled in Isaac, yet when Abraham was enjoined to sacrifice his son, he did not hesitate in the least, though he could not see how now God's promise was going to be fulfilled: for that reason Holy Writ adds: "Abraham put his faith in God, and it was reckoned virtue in him."[124] Now faith is a virtue that is rooted in knowledge. Because he knew God, he had faith in Him: he knew that His word would never fail. "Think of our father Abraham," says James, the Apostle; "was it not by his deeds

[120] *Bhagavad Gītā*, VI, 1.
[121] *Ibid.*, XVIII, 9.
[122] *Ṛg.*, I, 164, 22.
[123] *Gen.*, XXII, 1–12.
[124] *Ibid.*, XV, 60. Cf. *Rom.*, IV, 3; *Galat*, III, 6–9.

that he found approval, when he offered his son Isaac on the altar? See how his faith conspired with deeds done, and through those deeds his faith was realized.........You see, then, that it takes deeds as well as faith if a man is to be justified."[125] Moved by this extraordinary example the same Apostle continues: "What shall it profit, my brethren, if a man say he hath faith, but hath not works? Shall faith be able to save him? And if a brother or sister be naked, and want daily food; and one of you say to them: 'Go in peace, be ye warmed and filled'; yet give them not those things that are necessary for the body, what shall it profit? So faith also, if it have not works, is dead in itself."[126]

Works therefore are the final result of knowledge, because of love which is essentially operative. Without works there cannot be real sanctity, because there cannot be real love. Wisely therefore did Saint Ignatius of Loyola say: "Love consists in deeds rather that in words."[127] We may therefore finally conclude that the path to salvation is three-fold, if it is analytically considered: one must take the first steps through the path of knowledge, *jñāna-mārga*, a dreary, rugged path especially for a beginner. Soon the path becomes narrower though the wayfarer feels the inherent difficulty less, for he is moved by love: he walks through *bhakti-mārga*. Finally the path becomes very difficult and still narrower, according to those words of Christ: "How narrow is the road that leads on to life"[128], but the pilgrim jumps exultantly, surmounting difficulties, helping others on the way, encouraging all, pointing to the near end, enjoying already the proximity of *Vaikunta-nātha:* he is fully in *karma-yoga.*

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125 *James*, II, 21–24.

126 *Ibid.*, 14–17.

127 St. Ignatius, *Spiritual Exercises*, Fourth week, Contemplation for obtaining Love.

128 *Math.*, VII, 14.

IV

'FISH-EYES' AND ASCETICISM

That the possession of 'fish-eyes' is substantially equated with the acquisition of knowledge, as explained above, the constant Indian tradition sufficiently elucidates. But does this ambition of being endowed with 'fish-eyes' imply any other fundamental principle of higher spiritual significance? It seems so. This desideratum seems to mark the beginning of that striving for such higher spiritual ideals that surpass the ordinary spiritual life of man, and enter the realm of asceticism, which is the highest effort man can make towards the attainment of his final goal in this earthly life.

The wish to possess 'fish-eyes', which after all are the eyes of God, appears as an individual instance of a general plan for the acquisition of perfection, a plan which seems to aim at the imitation of God. Is such an imitation of God propounded by our ancient Indian sages?

The *Cāndogya Upaniṣad*, describing the struggle of a perfected soul to attain her end, says: "Shaking off evil as a horse his hairs; shaking off the body (*śarīraṁ*) as the moon releases itself from the mouth of Rāhu; I, a perfected soul (*kṛtātma*), am con-formed (*abhisambhavāmi*) to the uncreated world of Brahman."[1] After obtaining purification from the miseries of this world and ridding herself of her bodily influence and in particular of *ahankāra*, the soul declares herself to be perfect. How does she define her perfection? It is equated to "being made con-formed to the uncreated world of Brahman". This uncreated world of Brahman is the same as "the things to come",[2] "the heavenly things",[3] of St. Paul, viz. God

[1] *Cāndogya Upaniṣad*, VIII, 13.

[2] *Coloss.*, II, 17.

[3] *Hebr.*, VIII, 5.

Himself, for there is nothing uncreated but God. The perfection of the soul therefore is a con-formation with God, *i. e.* a re-shaping of the soul according to the *rūpam* (*forma*) of the model. Hence all spiritual perfection is an imitation of God. "God is the 'form' of the soul upon which he must impress His own image, as the seal on the wax or the stamp on the object it marks."[4]

Is there any natural foundation upon which this imitation of God may be built? There is. In the first chapter of *Genesis*, the author, after narrating the creation of the universe, introduces God saying: "Let us make man to our image and likeness";[5] and then: "And God created man to his image: to the image of God He created him."[6] A fact which is repeated and acknowledged by other books and authors. So the *Ecclesiasticus*: "God created man of the earth, and made him after his own image."[7] And the *Book of Wisdom*: "God created man incorruptible, and to the image of his own likeness he made him."[8] And the Islamic poet Jīlī: "God created Adam in his own image."[9] And Radhakrishnan: "Man is made in the image of God."[10] And Prof. Srinivasachari: "God has made man in his own image."[11]

"This original resemblance between man and God is attested by both reason and prudence."[12] But "it is not in his body but in his mind that man was made in the image of God."[13] For, as Plato explains, "our soul is very similar to whatever is

[4] St. Albert the Great, *On Union with God*, p. 25.

[5] *Gen.*, I, 26.

[6] *Ibid.*, 27.

[7] *Eccli.*, XVII, 1.

[8] *Wisd.*, II, 23.

[9] Cf. Nicholson, *Studies in Islamic Mysticism*, p. 113.

[10] Radhakrishnan, "Religion and Social Service", *The Indian Journal of Social Work*, V, p. 5.

[11] Srinivasachari, *Studies in Vedanta*, p. 157.

[12] Lactantius, *Divinarum Institutionum*, VII, 9: Migne, *P. L.*, VI, col. 765.

[13] St. Augustine, *Soliloquia*, I, 8: Migne, *P. L.*, XL, col. 871.

divine, immortal, intelligible, always changeless and similar to itself; while the body resembles whatever is human, mortal, sensible, composed, dissoluble, never similar to itself."[14] In fact God is *Sat-cit-ānanda* and He has willed that man should reflect His triple nature in a marvellous way. "For if he ask whence he is, God created him; whence his wisdom, God enlightened him; whence his happiness, God has given him to enjoy God; as existent he is fashioned, as spectator he is enlightened, as participant he is gladdened; he is, he sees, he loves; in God's eternity he thrives, in God's truth he shines, in God's goodness does he take delight."[15] Hence we read in a recent Hindu text that "*Manas* (the mind=the soul) is God's reflection in man."[16]

The soul of man therefore is something *Brahmaiva*, 'divine', not because he is a particle of God, for God is partless (*akhanda*), but a reflexion (*rūpam*) of God's nature, a θεῖον χρῆμα, "a thing divine", as Plotinus puts it.[17] That is the reason why of the eight *Ādityas*, who naturally participate in the spiritual nature of *Āditya*, it is said that "the eighth angelic being [the last *Āditya*] is in human guise, *manuṣvat daivyam aṣṭaman*"[18]; that is to say, the last spirit created by God (the soul of man) "remains incarnate in the universe."[19] Thus the *Aitareya Āraṇyaka* may rightly say: *Imām lokamabhyārcat puruṣarūpeṇa.*[20] "He (God) shines upon this world in the image of man." All the creatures of the world proclaim the glory of the creator, but the reflexion of the latter shines in a special way in the soul of man. Accordingly the *Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa* says that in this visible world "man is the thing nearest to Prajāpati."[21] Such is therefore the

[14] Plato, *Phaedo*, 180.

[15] St. Augustine, *De Civitate Dei*, XI, 24: Migne, *P. L.*, XLI, col. 338.

[16] *Sanatana Dharma*, p. 113.

[17] Plotinus, *Enneades*, V, 13.

[18] *Ṛg.*, II, 5, 2.

[19] Coomaraswamy, *A New Approach to the Vedas*, p. 67.

[20] *Aitareya Āraṇyaka*, II, 2, 1.

[21] *Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa*, VII, 5, 2, 6.

wonderful nature of man, considering which St. John Chrysostom exclaims: "We wonder at and glorify the supreme architect God, that he should have placed this kind of immense beauty and reflection of some unspeakable wisdom in the dust and mud of our bodies."[22]

St. Robert Bellarmine enumerates ten different traits by which the human soul resembles God:

1. The human soul is a created spirit; God is the uncreated spirit.

2. The human soul is immortal; God is eternal.

3. The human soul is endowed with reason; God is light and understanding.

4. The human soul has practical knowledge of things; the highest law is the mind of God, (for it is *ṛta*).[23]

5. The human soul invents arts; God is the fountain of wit and wisdom, which invents all things.

6. The human soul possesses a free will; God is absolutely free in all his actions, never influenced by anyone, the Absolute.

7. The human soul has power to desire spiritual good things; God is the highest good, the *Summum Bonum*, which is charity.

8. The human soul is in the whole body; God is in the whole Creation.

9. The human soul is an image of the Most Holy Trinity; it produces a word or thought and a love, that are accidents; in God, the Father generates a Word (the Son) (*ajāyat ekam*),[24] and the Father and the Son breathe the Holy Spirit of Love (*kāmaḥ sama vartat*),[25] and all that substantially and eternally.

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[22] St. John Chrysostom, *De Prophetiarum Obscuritate*, II, 7: Migne, *P.G.*, LVI, col. 186.

[23] *Ṛg.*, X, 190, 1; I, 65, etc. Cf. Lefever, *The Vedic Idea of Sin*, pp. 1-38.

[24] *Ibid.*, X, 129, 3.

[25] *Ibid.*, 4.

10. The human soul bestows natural gifts on the body; God grants heavenly gifts to the soul.[26]

A brief inspection of all these similarities between man and God makes us realize that man is a living image of a living God, that is, he is not precisely an image in his nature only, an image in his *esse* (the Scholastics would say), but also in his activity, in his *operari*. His life must therefore be an imitation of God's life, as far as *aSAT* may imitate *SAT*. Such will be the perfection of this image during his earthly life. Its full completion and fulfilment will be done in *svarga* through the participation of the life of God, which will be the work of His *prasāda*, called by Catholic theologians in this case *lumen gloriae*. This is what Prof. Srinivasachari means when he says: "There is a seed of God in the soul of every man and this is known by its fruits in spiritual experience and their several *rasas*."[27]

Realizing this similarity between man and God, Vasiṣṭha explained the possibility of attaining the divine perfection to king Janaka of Videha thus: "The Paramātman alone is my friend. I can make friends with Him. Whatever be my nature and whoever I may be, I am like Him and am capable of becoming like unto Him. I see my similarity with Him, I am indeed like Him. He is pure (*i. e.* a spirit); and it is clear that I (*i. e.* in my soul) am also of the same nature."[28]

Such is the fundamental aptitude by virtue of which man has to imitate God, and that according to his nature. "As a mirror in which a person sees the form of himself and cannot see it without a mirror, such is the relation of God to the perfect man, who cannot possibly see his own form but in the mirror of the name Allāh; and he is also a mirror to God, for God laid upon Himself the necessity that His names and attributes

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[26] St. Robert Bellarmine, *The Ascent of the Mind to God*, VII, pp. 139–157.

[27] Srinivasachari, *op. cit.*, p. 172.

[28] *Māhābharata*, Śānti Parva, 11496–11497.

should not be seen save in the perfect man."[29] Man is therefore to improve this divine image he has received from the Creator, by imitating and copying all the traits of the model, one by one, on his own soul. Our Lord Jesus Christ openly enjoined this on all his *śiṣyas*: "Be you therefore perfect, as also your heavenly Father is perfect."[30] A precept which is also substantially repeated by St. Paul: "Be ye, therefore followers of God, as most dear children."[31] A great task, indeed, to carry on which man will be helped by God Himself with heavenly graces, as the Lateran Council IV reminds us of when glossing the above words of Christ: "Be perfect with the perfection caused by grace, as your heavenly Father is perfect with the perfection of His nature."[32]

Though undoubtedly helped by God Himself, man is called upon to make great efforts to reach this goal, for he is attracted by the body and by the world in an opposite direction. Yet "strive to reach perfection, however far beyond thee it may seem; thy very striving will bring thee daily nearer to the goal;"[33] "and the more a man attains to his own perfection the more like God does he become."[34] For "if any image possess intellect, it at once understands that all its good consists in its likeness to its model; and accordingly it will very often place itself before that model, and study it carefully and try to polish and conform itself so that it becomes a real reproduction of the said model. And, if every image, even of shapeless matter, act thus, how much more will an image of a most beautiful object. We are the images of God, namely, a Being of infinite beauty. Hence all our good consists in similarity to God."[35]

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[29] Jili, *Insānu'l Kāmil,* 60, in Nicholson, *op. cit.*, pp. 106–107.

[30] *Matth.*, V, 48.

[31] *Ephes.*, V, 2.

[32] Lateran Council IV, ch. '*Damnamus*': Denziger, *Enchiridion*, p. 122.

[33] Pesch, *The Christian Philosophy of Life*, p. 486.

[34] Moore, *Principles of Ethics*, pp. 325–326.

[35] St. Robert Bellarmine, *De Cognitione Dei*, IV: *Opera Omnia*, VIII. p. 632.

The same author declares a practical manner of beginning this improvement of God's image in ourselves after its model. "That thou (O my soul)," says he, "mayest therefore the more easily imitate an example of such beauty and desire as much as thou canst to be like Him, wherein consisteth thy highest perfection, profit, honour, joy, rest and happiness, consider that the beauty of God thy example consisteth in wisdom and holiness."[36] Wisdom is the perfection of the intellect; holiness or virtue, the perfection of the will. The greater a man's virtue and wisdom are, the more like he is to Him who is all Goodness and Infinite Wisdom. Consequently by virtue and wisdom a man is assimilated to God.[37]

The first effect of this acquisition of wisdom and virtue will be the detachment of the heart from all the things of the world. The ancient Indian *ṛṣis* had God proposed as a model to themselves as regards this detachment, for Kṛṣṇa himself says that he is so detached from all the works of Creation: "And these works do not bind me, O Dhanaṁjaya; for I seat as one indifferent, from these works detached."[38] Kṛṣṇa's detachment is an invitation to all to practise this asceticism after his example, not only to those who actually renounce the world, but to all men in general, even to warriors like Arjuna, to whom in particular Kṛṣṇa says: "Be thou ascetic, Arjuna."[39] For to all also our Lord Jesus Christ said: "It is easier for a camel to pass through the eye of a needle, than for a rich man to enter into the kingdom of heaven"[40]—the rich man being one whose heart is not detached from the things of the world. Dr. Ananda Coomaraswamy, commenting upon these words, rightly says: "It would be harder for us, such as we are in ourselves at the present day 'by temperament and training', to enter the kingdom of heaven than for the camel to pass through the eye of the

[36] St. Robert Bellarmine, *The Ascent of the Mind to God*, pp. 11–12.
[37] Cf. St. Thomas Aquinas, *Summa contra Gentiles*, III, 19.
[38] *Bhagavad Gītā*, IX, 9.
[39] *Ibid.*, VI, 46.
[40] *Matth.*, XIX, 24; *Mark*, X, 25.

needle.....This is by no means a doctrine of despair, but much rather merely a statement of the task to be accomplished, that of reminding the modern man, who has 'forgotten who he is', that he is more than 'an animal, reasoning and mortal'."[41]

Man must understand that the more entangled he gets in the things of the world, the more he acts against his own nature that leads him to be like God. For "all the invitations to striving for perfection we feel tend to this—to draw us from the attachment to temporal things in order that our mind would rise to God more freely."[42] Because, as a great master of the spiritual life avers, "unless and until we are free from all sins, great or small, it is impossible for us to see God's face."[43] "Detachment is the law of spiritual life, and the more detached is the life from its expression, the more it enjoys the transcendent Being."[44] The final reason for it is that "there is a bondage when the mind is attached to any person, object, place or condition whatsoever. There is a release when the mind is unattached to any person, object, place or condition whatsoever. Attachment is death, non-attachment is eternal life."[45]

We may therefore conclude that "detachment....and perfection go together."[46] Hence "as a snake readily abandons its old skin, from knowing that it ought to be quitted, just so he who desires liberation should abandon nature."[47] Thus the man who strives to imitate God finally becomes "loosed from bondage (*bandhāt pramucyate*)."[48] This ascetic, "whose spirit is content with knowledge and experience, immovably exalted,

[41] Coomaraswamy, "Eastern Religions and Western Thought", *The Review of Religions*, 1942, p. 145.

[42] St. Thomas Aquinas, *De Perfectione Vitae Spiritualis* (Opusc. XVIII), c.6.

[43] Tauler, *Preparation a la Mort*: OEuvres, V, p. 431.

[44] Sircar, *Mysticism in Bhagavat Gītā*, p. 192.

[45] Sivananda Saraswati, *op. cit.*, pp. 120-121.

[46] D'Arcy, *The Spirit of Charity*, p. 44.

[47] Kapila, *Aphorisms*, IV, 6. Cf. Ballantyne, *Christianity contrasted with Hindu Philosophy*, p. 289.

[48] *Bhagavad Gītā*, V, 3.

victorious over sense, to whom earth, stones and gold are all alike, is called controlled."[49] Such is, indeed, the great practical wisdom produced by detachment; as St. John Chrysostom puts it, "to strip oneself of all is to become rich."[50] That is the reason why the learned Peter de Blois, Archdeacon of Bath, in the 12th century, coveted the wisdom possessed by a simple Carthusian lay-brother. "I would," he wrote, "that my wisdom and my philosophy were the philosophy of Brother Gerard, for his heart was empty of all save Jesus Christ."[51] "Such a man who abandons all the desires of the heart and is satisfied in the Self by the Self, is called stable in mind."[52] The acquisition of this perfect spiritual rest is already a practical result of his effort to imitate God. He has passed from the fluttering border of the flag to the hoist near the flagstaff, thus participating of the steadiness of the latter. "The ascetic who ever thus with mind restrained sets himself to the practice of control comes to the peace whose end is calm, the peace that is Me."[53] "'A lamp unflickering in a windless place'—that is the simile men use when an ascetic, with thought restrained, practices control of self."[54]

It is to those who have arrived at this stage of quiet and calm, unaffected by the waves of feeling and desire, unmoved by the storms of the world, that God speaks in the silence of their souls. It is to those who are true in their heart, pure in deed, whose senses are controlled, that the Supreme Self manifests itself, as Yama wisely propounds to young Naciketas.[55] Any sacrifice seems small to acquire this great boon. "It seems to me," wrote a famous modern writer to a friend, "that we must put God not only as the 'First,' but as the 'Only': nothing

[49] *Ibid.*, VI, 8.

[50] Attwater, *St. John Chrysostom*, p. 65.

[51] *Annales Ordinis Cartusiensis*, III, p. 58.

[52] *Bhagavad Gītā*, VI, 18.

[53] *Ibid.*, VI, 15.

[54] *Ibid.*, 19 (Hill's Trans. p. 158).

[55] *Kaṭha Upaniṣad*, II, 10–25.

else must be on the same plane at all. We cannot do this without passing through the stage of actually sacrificing for His sake things good in themselves. It is only when we have reached this interior detachment through these means that we can enjoy His gifts safely. It is surely a fallacy to say: 'This thing is good: therefore I may use it to the full'—a fallacy, since it omits the vital premise that we are not good. We are spiritual invalids until God is our All; and must live like invalids—viz. not using good things to the full."[56] Thus by the abandonment of the things of the world in the affection of the heart, our soul will become more and more like God, her model. Our effort must be not to bring God to our level; but to rise ourselves to the level of God, as far as a contingent being may. "My God," says a Spanish Mystic of the sixteenth century, "is an eagle teaching His children to fly, and to look upwards at the bright Sun of Righteousness."[57] "The object of Vedānta", says Prof. Srinivasachari, "is to raise man to the level of God. The finite is to be infinitized and not the Infinite humanized."[58] Hence we may conclude with Gandhiji: "Infinite striving after perfection is one's right. It is its own reward. The rest is in the hands of God."[59] "Without attachment ever perform the work that thou must do, for if without attachment a man works, he gains the Highest."[60] By the possession of 'fish-eyes' man crosses the threshold of the palace of Asceticism where life divine reigns supreme.

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[56] Mgr R. H. Benson, writing to a friend, in Martindale, *The Life of Monsignor Robert Hugh Benson*, II, pp. 241–242.

[57] Fray Bernardino de Laredo, O. F. M., in Allison Peers, *Studies of the Spanish Mystics*, II, p. 51.

[58] Srinivasachari, *The Philosophy of Viśiṣṭādvaita*, p. 11.

[59] Gandhi, *The Story of My Experiments with Truth*, I, p. 211.

[60] *Bhagavad Gītā*, III, 19.

V

'FISH-EYES' AND THE VIRTUE OF INDIFFERENCE

By the acquisition of 'fish-eyes' man will take a further step on the path of asceticism, depreciating the value of all created things to a common level, apart from the will of God and from the actual help they render us in the prosecution of our end. Explaining this high doctrine Our Lord Jesus Christ also used the simile of our corporal vision. He said: "The light of the body is thy eye. If the eye be single, thy whole body will be lightsome; but if it be evil, thy body also will be darksome. Take heed therefore, that the light which is in thee, be not darkness. If then thy whole body is lightsome, having no part of darkness, the whole shall be lightsome; and as a bright lamp shall enlighten thee."[1] The eye is said to be the light of the body, for the eye among all the senses is the one that communicates more light to the soul. A single eye is an eye which looks as God looks, for God is pure identity. The eye of God cannot be double. An evil eye is an eye that does not look according to the supreme rule of Truth, and is consequently bound to produce darkness only. 'Fish-eyes' will always produce light and will originate wisdom. That is the reason why a great spiritual man, Mgr. Olier, used to pray God thus: "May Thy light be the single light that would guide me and make me see all things such as they are in themselves."[2] With such light all the things of the world, both pleasant and unpleasant, were seen by St. Bernadette de Lourdes when she wrote for her private use: "Never to be down-hearted, to see the holy will of God in all that happens to me. To thank Him for everything, thinking that it is for my good that He allows it."[3]

[1] *Luke*, XI, 34–36.

[2] Sertillanges, *Notre Vie*, II, p. 20.

[3] Duhourcan, *Saint Bernadette of Lourdes*, pp. 245–246.

This equanimity of the soul to everything that may befall one is what is called indifference, a virtue that places the ascetic above all the fluctuations of this contingent world. "Who is there to stand comparison with the liberated soul who has no desire whatsoever at heart, who is contented and indifferent to everything?"[4]

St. Ignatius of Loyola proposes the practice of this virtue as a necessary thing in all spiritual life, a thing which is not easy to acquire but for which the soul must earnestly strive with God's help. "It is necessary", he says, "to make ourselves indifferent to all created things in all that is allowed to the choice of our free will and is not prohibited to it; so that, on our part, we want not health rather than sickness, riches rather than poverty, honour rather than dishonour, long rather than short life, and so in all the rest."[5] These are called 'the pairs of opposites', *nirdvandva* in ancient Indian literature.[6] This virtue of indifference is not concerned with the actual happenings that occur during our life, to which we cannot be indifferent, but which we must embrace willingly as coming from God's hands. It refers to future events towards which we must not feel by reason inclined to the pleasant rather than to the unpleasant. "The essential indifferne", says one who understood the Ignatian mind to perfection, "is a constant disposition of will, which, in the choice and use of creatures, guards it against the influence of pleasure or pain, against natural indignation and aversion. This indifference keeps the will undermined and the act of election suspended, as long as we are under the mere influence of the pleasure or pain caused by creatures. Indifference, then, is purely negative in its nature: not to choose, not to accept, and not to reject; in short, not to come to any decision, regardless of our last end and simply because creatures are agreeable or disagreeable."[7] In order to understand this virtue

[4] *Aṣṭāvakra Saṁhitā*, XVIII, 89, p. 205.

[5] St. Ignatius, *The Spiritual Exercises*, Principle and Foundation.

[6] Cf. *Mahābhārata*, Sānti Parva, 528.

[7] Meschler, *The Spiritual Exercises of St. Ignatius*, p. 28.

more intimately it is worth noticing that "there are in fact two kinds of indifference: indifference of the sensibility and indifference of the will. It is this last alone which St. Ignatius requires. The more modern word 'detachment' expresses a large part of what St. Ignatius means by indifference, but not quite the whole,"[8] for indifference transcends the present time and paves the path to the future.

The secret of this wise behaviour is known by those who are possessed of 'fish-eyes'. If one understands well the real nature of the material things by which we are surrounded in this life, especially in contrast with the nature of God, one will not find the practice of complete detachment very difficult. Such has been the constant method practised by all schools of true asceticism, in order to reach the coveted goal. To this effect says Archbishop Goodier: "God being the only life, and creation being but waves upon its surface, the Hindu 'saint' is distinguished, first of all, by his absolute contempt and repudiation of worldly goods, even of worldly convenience as being the mere appendages of this shadowy thing, life."[9] Such was the attitude of that famous ancient king of Magadha Bṛhadratha who, having installed his son on the throne, retired to the forest to follow the path of asceticism. After a long period of time he was visited by a well-known sage Śākāyanya who told him: "Arise! Arise! Choose a boon!" The old King in his extreme poverty did not ask for anything earthly. He wanted only knowledge of the Ātman (God). Śākāyanya declared that to know the Ātman was a difficult task. Bṛhadratha nevertheless insisted again and again, for, he said, "in this sort of circle of *saṁsāra*, what is the good of enjoying desires?" He had only thirst of the knowledge of God. "In this cycle of *saṁsāra* I feel like a frog in a waterless well."[10]

[8] Longridge, *The Spiritual Exercises of Saint Ignatius*, p. 29. Cf. Suarez, *De Religione*, X, 9.

[9] Goodier, *An Introduction to the Study of Ascetical and Mystical Theology*, p. 19.

[10] *Maitri Upaniṣad*, I, 2–4.

This is the only reasonable attitude face to face with the creation, for man was created for the possession of God. Hence "everything that is not God is unworthy of man."[11] That is the reason why he is never satisfied with anything created. Take for instance riches, which are the most coveted of all material things. Hear what a great master of the spiritual life says about them: "Riches make not their masters rich, who live in perpetual covetousness and are never satisfied with their coffers. Wherefore the Holy Ghost, speaking of those who are called rich, and of the poor of the Gospel, says, those are, as it were, rich and enjoy nothing, and these are, as it were, poor and possess all things."[12] This very wish of increasing their riches shows in a practical way how unsubstantial and miserable they are. They want to increase the quantity, for their quality is so low.

Only the light that is diffused by the knowledge of God through the possession of 'fish-eyes' dispels the fatal spell cast by all these material things. "As long as the self does not know the Lord, it gets attached to worldly pleasures and is kept bound; but when it knows Him, all fetters fall away from it."[13] For this knowledge, by endowing man with the right viewpoint, will discover the proper nature of all things, which are in reality not different from each other, apart from their Creator. "As a person from the summit of a hill looks down upon men on the plain below; even so he that has climbed to the top of the edifice of knowledge sees people grieving for things which are not worth mourning for."[14] Thus "the ascetic whose spirit is content with knowledge and experience, immovably exalted, victorious over sense, to whom earth, stones and gold are all alike, is called controlled."[15] The wise man must be like a

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[11] Grou, *Manual for Interior Souls*, pp. 152–155.

[12] Nieremberg, *The Difference between Temporal and Eternal*, p. 298.

[13] *Śvetāśvatara Upaniṣad*, I, 8.

[14] *Mahābhārata*, Śānti Parva, 530.

[15] *Bhagavad Gītā*, VI, 8.

lotus flower, which expels all the drops of water that fall upon its petals. In a like manner all the worldly and material things must be detached from his heart, whose only attraction is God Himself. Controlled in this way was the heart of the great Jaina Tīrthaṅkara Mahāvīra Vardhamāna, about whom we read in the *Kalpa Sūtra*: "The Venerable One lived except in the rainy reason, all the eight months of summer and winter, in villages only a single night, in towns only five nights; he was indifferent alike to the smell of ordure and of sandal, to straw and jewels, dirt and gold, pleasure and pain, attached neither to this world not to that beyond, desiring neither life nor death."[16]

This marvellous equanimity of feelings is the fruit of the vision of God in all things, as Sanatkumāra taught Nārada:

> The seer does not see death (*mṛtyuṁ*)
> Nor sickness (*rogaṁ*) nor any distress (*duḥkhatā*)
> The seer sees only the All (*sarvaṁ*)
> Obtains the All entirely (*sarvaśaḥ*)"[17]

Thus the ascetic "is equally well poised between heat and cold, between pleasure and pain, between honour and dishonour."[18] Such a one who is "unmoved by weal or woe, or wealth or want",[19] "who is controlled in joy and sorrow, should be called a reasonable man,"[20] for he is "loosed from bondage" (*bandhāt pramucyate*).[21] His life is compard to "a lamp unflickering in a windless place."[22]

This is real practical wisdom. "A wise man, though living in the world, is never attached to it."[23] For "he is truly wise that accounteth all earthly things as dung that he may gain Christ,"[24] following that advice of David: "If riches abound,

[16] *Kalpa Sūtra* (*S. B, E.*, XXII, p. 262).
[17] *Cāndogya Upaniṣad*, VII, 26, 2.
[18] *Bhagavad Gītā*, VI, 7.
[19] Eckhart, *Super Oratione Dominica: Opera Latina*, I, p. 56.
[20] *Ibid.*, p. 460.
[21] *Bhagavad Gītā*, V, 30?
[22] *Ibid.*, VI, 19.
[23] *Śrīmad Bhāgavatam*, II, 1.
[24] Kempis, *The Imitation of Christ*, I, 3, 6.

set not your heart upon them."[25] This happy man enjoys the true liberty of the children of God. For "he has true liberty who is not taken with the desire of temporal things nor with the praise or favour of man nor with self complacency or displeasure of others, nor with carnal friendship or servile fear, nor with the delight of transitory joy."[26]

Famous among all in ancient India for his perfect detachment was Janaka of old, King of the Videhas, whose capital was the rich city of Mithilā. He is said to have declared: "My wealth is boundless. At the same time I have nothing; yet I live in great happiness. If the whole of Mithilā be reduced to ashes in a conflagration, nothing of mine will be burnt, I shall lose nothing."[27] Equal example of detachment gave in more recent times a saintly English King, Edward the Confessor. After the labours of the day Edward was once resting, while his Chamberlain Hugolin brought out the chest of money to pay his various retainers; but while he went away for a while he left the chest open. Just then a scullion came and thinking that the king was asleep, he carried off treasure out of the chest twice. Encouraged by the previous successes he came again and while he was actually enriching himself the third time, the king, who had seen all, quietly advised the thief thus: "Fly, fellow, for Hugolin is coming back, and he will not leave you as much as a half-penny." On his return Hugolin discovered what had happened and questioned his master. Edward however did not disclose who had taken the treasure, saying: "He needed it more than we; Edward has surely enough treasure. As Jesus Christ teaches us, wordly property ought to be common to all those who have need of it."[28]

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[25] *Ps.*, LXI, 11.

[26] St. Albert the Great, *The Paradise of the Soul*, p. 131.

[27] *Mahābhārata*, Śānti Parva, 528–529; 6640–6661; 9916–9917.

[28] The story is given in a Norman-French poem of the time of Henry III written probably by a Westminster monk. A sculpture representing the episode may be seen on the back of the screen behind the high altar in Westminster Abbey. Cf. Gore, *The Sermon on the Mount*, p. 98.

Such a detachment is absolutely necessary to make any progress on the way of the spirit. "Detachment", says Prof. Sircar, "is the law of spiritual life and the more detached is the life from its expression, the more it enjoys the transcendent Being."[29] And when the heart is fully detached from all created things, when it entertains no desires either side of any 'pair of opposites', when it does not feel more joy in pleasurable happenings than in sorrowful events, when it is still as the flame of a lamp in a windless night, then man has obtained purity of heart. "Purity of heart", says Tiruvalluvar, "is a treasure into a man."[30] For as St. Thomas Aquinas explains, "purity is necessary if the mind is to be applied to God, because the human mind is sullied when it is attached to inferior things; just as anything is rendered impure by being mixed with something baser, e. g. silver when mixed with lead. The mind ought to be withdrawn from inferior objects if it is to be united to the supreme object; and therefore the mind that lacks purity cannot be applied to God."[31] Consequently, concludes the same Angelic Doctor, "the more perfectly the soul of man is led to love God, the more thoroughly is she uprooted from the love of temporal things."[32] A process which St. Teresa of Jesus summarizes in these precious words: "Withhold thy heart from all things, seek God and thou shalt find him."[33]

This is precisely the cause of the great happiness which detachment engenders in the heart of man. For since God is the *bhūman*, the ascetic so detached possesses the plenitude of being, and consequently all his desires are thoroughly quenched. We may therefore rightly say with St. John Chrysostom that "to strip oneself of all is to become rich."[34] And this possession

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[29] Sircar, *Mysticism in Bhagavad Gītā*, p. 192.
[30] Tiruvalluvar, *Kural*, II, (Aiyar's, p. 98).
[31] St. Thomas Aquinas, *Summa Theologica*, II ª IIªᵉ, q. 81, a. 8.
[32] St. Thomas Aquinas, *De Perfectione Vitae Spiritualis*, c. 6 (*Opusc. 18*).
[33] St. Teresa of Jesus, *Maxims*, No. 36, p. 673.
[34] Attwater, *St. John Chrysostom*, p. 65.

of God, which is such a rich treasure for the soul, will cause a real disgust for all the things of the world, as said above. "The more a soul clings to God, the more she will be led to withhold herself from whatever separates her from God."[35] This purity of heart will finally be the cause of the eternal happiness of man, as it is promised by Christ Our Lord: "Blessed art the clean of heart, for they shall see God."[36]

Now concerning the 'pairs of opposites' referred to by St. Ignatius, the only standard by which the heart may be inclined to either of these opposites is to be the glory of God, which will be easily discovered whenever they lead man to his eternal salvation. "Prosperity and adversity," says St. Robert Bellarmine, "wealth and poverty, health and sickness, honour and ignominy, life and death, of a wise man, are neither to be desired nor avoided; but if they make to God's glory and the eternal welfare, they are good and to be desired; if they hinder it, they are evil and to be avoided."[37] Very wisely therefore did Epictetus write the following monologue addressed to God: "Have I murmured against Thy governance? I have fallen sick, because Thou didst will it; others have been sick, but I have been so willingly. I have become poor at Thy will, but I have been so cheerfully. I have held no public office, because Thou didst not will it. I have never sought for pride of place. But hast Thou ever seen me sad on that account? I was ready for anything Thou shouldst command or signify as Thy pleasure, and now willest Thou that I should depart from the festal crowd? I depart, and I am deeply grateful to Thee for that. Thou hast deigned to allow me to keep the feast with Thee, to see Thy works and to follow Thee in my mind in the governance thereof."[38] The will of God is finally the only reason why all these extremes might be embraced and adhered to. "Living and

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[35] Valensin, *Initiation aux Exercises Spirituels*, p. 33.

[36] *Matth.*, V, 8.

[37] Surin, *Questions sur l'Amour de Dieu*, pp. 79–83.

[38] Epictetus, *Dissertations*, III, 5 (Long's ed., p. 210)

dying," says Marcus Aurelius, "honour and infamy, pleasure and pain, riches and poverty—all these things are the common allotment of the virtuous and vicious, because they have nothing intrinsically noble or base in their nature; and therefore, to speak properly, are neither good nor bad."[39] And the Chinese philosopher Confucius likewise says: "Life and death come from the will of God; riches and honours are in the hands of God."[40]

Now considering these pairs of opposites in particular, there is no doubt that our heart unhesitatingly feels inclined towards health rather than towards sickness, and yet "as health is a gift of God, so also is sickness. God sends us sickness for our probation, amendment and correction, and for many other good things and advantages that are apt to flow from it—as knowledge of our own weakness, dissipation of the illusions of our vanity, detachment from the things of earth and the appetites of sensuality, abatement of the impetuosity and strength of our greatest enemy, the flesh, a reminder that this is not our native city, but a sort of inn, where we are in exile, and other like things. Wherefore the Wise man says: 'A grave illness maketh the soul temperate and strong.'[41] Thus we ought to be as conformable to the will of God in sickness as in health, taking it as coming from the hand of God our Lord, when he is pleased to send it. One of those ancient Fathers said to a disciple of his that was sick: 'Son, grieve not over thy sickness, but rather render great thanks to God for it: for if thou art iron, the fire will consume thy rust; and if thou art gold, thou wilt be proved in the fire.' It is a great virtue and a great act of religion, to render thanks to God in sickness."[42] Thus Fr. Damien De Veuster, who had been looking after the lepers of the Molokai Islands for many years, was finally infected by the

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[39] Marcus Aurelius, *The Meditations*, II, 11 (Collier's trans., p. 27)

[40] Giles, *Confucianism and its Rivals*, pp. 70–71.

[41] *Eccli.*, XXX, 2.

[42] Rodríguez, *Practice of Perfection and Christian Virtues*, I, pp. 484–485. Cf. Strappini, *The Inward Gospel*, pp. 30–42.

fatal disease; and because he had been indifferent to it before it appeared, he announced the event to his religious superior in the following words: "You must know that our Lord has deigned to select me, allowing leprosy to attack me. I shall be eternally grateful to God for this favour."[43] And writing to a friend some time after, he added: "I try my best to carry without much complaining and in a practical way, for my poor soul's sanctification, the long-foreseen miseries of the disease, which after all is a providential agent to detach the heart from all earthly affection and prompts much the desire of a Christian soul to be united—the sooner the better—with Him who is her only life."[44]

As regards riches and poverty "the world says and thinks that poverty is the greatest misfortune; and Jesus Christ in the first part of the famous Sermon on the Mount, teaches that poverty is the first beatitude."[45] The true secret of the happiness brought by poverty is found in a saying of the Egyptian philosopher Amenophis: "Better is poverty at the hand of God than riches in the storehouse."[46] Because the latter is ever deceitful and full of misery. "The acquisition of wealth", said the Brāhman host of the Pāṇḍavas in the City of Ekacakrā, "is hell; it is attended with misery. Great misery is for those that desire wealth, greater for him who has already acquired it. Great affection is engendered on the acquired wealth; and when it goes away the misery is great."[47] It is therefore great wisdom to despise wealth. "Go to now, ye rich man," says one of the Apostles of Jesus Christ, "weep and howl in your miseries which shall come upon you. Your riches are corrupted; and your garments are moth-eaten. Your gold and silver is

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[43] Hoomaeart, *Le Lépreux Volontaire*, p. 85.

[44] Clifford, *Father Damien*, pp. 111–112.

[45] Lacordaire, *Choix de Conférences et Allocutions*, p. 92.

[46] Griffith, "The Teaching of Amenophis the Son of Kanakht", *The Journal of Egyptian Archaeology*, XII, p. 205.

[47] *Māhābhārata*, Ādi Parva, 6203–6204.

cankered, and the rust of them shall be for a testimony against you, and shall eat your flesh like fire. You have stored up to yourselves wrath against the last days."[48]

As to life and death, the *Aṣṭāvakra Saṁhitā* clearly asserts that "it is only some broad-minded person who has neither attraction for, nor aversion to............life and death",[49] and such broad-mindedness is always the effect of wisdom. And so it happens with honour and dishonour: "Naturally of a vacant mind and acting as he pleases, the wise man is not affected by honour or dishonour like an ordinary man."[50] For "failure, ignominy, poverty, pain and helplessness are much better than the most glorious successes in any sphere of action whatever, if the former go with the will of God and the latter without it. There is no good for man anywhere, but the will of God."[51] St. Gregory the Great gives the final reason: "Sufferings are gifts of God to one who accepts them in expiation for his faults of the flesh."[52]

A great practical example of this indifference was given by that extraordinarily wise man of the land of Edom, Job, who, endowed with 'fish-eyes', after he had lost his riches, children and health, patiently proclaimed against the entreaties of his friends and of his own wife: "If we have received good things at the hand of God, why should we not receive evil?"[53] "The Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away; as it hath pleased the Lord so is it done: blessed be the name of the Lord."[54] A similar example also comes from ancient India in the person of Emperor Yudhiṣṭhira, who, expelled from his kingdom by his enemies and

[48] *Jac.*, V, 1–3.

[49] *Aṣṭāvakra Saṁhitā*, XVII, 6, p. 132.

[50] *Ibid.*, XVIII, 24, p. 163.

[51] Rickaby, *An Old Man's Jottings*, pp. 246–247.

[52] In a letter to St. Leander of Seville (August, 599): Batiffol, *Saint Gregory the Great*, p. 273.

[53] *Job*, II, 10.

[54] *Ibid.*, I, 21.

wandering through the forests for a number of years, enduring great privations and incredible sufferings, never was heard to pronounce an angry word, for which he was once objurgated by his wife Draupadī. He mildly replied: "Eternal regions are for that person who, though powerful, conquers his anger; while he that is angry, is foolish and meets with ruin both in this world and in the next........... The world belongs to the forgiving; they obtain honours here and holy blessedness there........... Forgiveness and humility are the qualities of the self-controlled and constitute the eternal virtue and I shall therefore adopt them."[55] Job and Yudhiṣṭhira were indeed possessed of 'fish-eyes'. They discriminated values truly and judged the events of the world from the point of view of the Eternal.

They followed the rule promulgated by the Upaniṣadic sages: "Having scrutinized the worlds that are built up by work, a Brāhman should arrive at indifference. The world that was not made (Brahma world[56]=Brahma) is not won by what is done."[57] Because there is nothing in the whole creation that may be compared to the riches and infinitude of God. All the privations and evils of the world are worth to attain to His possession, "For I reckon," said one who had suffered much[58], "that the sufferings of this time are not worthy to be compared with the glory to come, that shall be revealed in us."[59]

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[55] *Mahābhārata*, Āraṇyaka Parva, 939–1067. There is a popular Tamil proverb which refers to this reply of king Yudhiṣṭhira:

Ponginar Kadaluvar,
Poruppar Arasaluvar.

Which means: "The impatient man will rule in the forest; the patient one will rule as a king." Cf. Sandegren, *Gorom Jesus till Konung'*, pp. 11–13.

[56] *Cāndogya Upaniṣad*, VIII, 13.

[57] *Muṇḍaka Upaniṣad*, I, 2, 12.

[58] Cf. *II Cor.*, XI, 24–33.

[59] *Rom.*, VIII, 18.

VI

'FISH-EYES' AND THE GLORY OF GOD

There is a further vision which the person endowed with 'fish-eyes' enjoys, one which the true knowledge of God communicates: the vision of the glory of God.

The ordinary man in this world expects, looks for and enjoys his own glory only. In *our* grammar we have one person only and that is 'I'; we know of one possessive pronoun only and that is 'mine', as recorded in this Koṅkaṇi proverb: "What is yours is mine; but what is mine is my own."[1] *Ahankāra*, selfishness, is a common disease of mankind, a disease which proceeds from *avidyā*. "Egoism is the product of *avidyā*."[2] Rooted in ignorance and darkness, the plant of selfishness cannot bear any good fruit. "Know this petty ego to be the root of all evil and delusion."[3] "Know thou that the love of thyself doth thee more hurt than anything in the world."[4] Rabindranath Tagore composed a beautiful little poem in which he emphasized the ubiquitousness of this enemy and its shameful company: "I came out alone on my way to my tryst," he says. "But who is this that follows me in the silent dark? I move aside to avoid his presence, but I escape him not. He makes the dust rise from the earth with his swagger; he adds his loud voice to every word that I utter. He is my own little self, my lord, he knows no shame, but I am ashamed to come to Thy door in his company."[5] The feeling of the poet was fully right. One cannot appear accompanied by this fiend in God's presence.

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[1] Talmaki, *Konkani Proverbs*, prov. No. 355.

[2] Sivananda Saraswati, *The Ten Upanishads*, p. 113.

[3] Turiyananda, "The Path of Self-Surrender", *Prabuddha Bharata*, XLIX, p. 255.

[4] Kempis, *The Imitation of Christ*, III, 27, 1.

[5] Tagore, *Gītānjali*, 30, pp. 23–24.

For "egoism lies near to the root of the misery and imperfection of our human life. That 'I' which is the centre of the individual's consciousness, to which he relates all his experiences, is itself a product of the unreal, and in its turn it is the cause of unreality. Every state of consciousness in which there is the sense of an 'I' and of an object known as 'mine' belongs to the realm of ignorance. Egoism or self-consciousness, whatever its content, is declared to be evil; it is not simply an occasional instrument of evil but it is the enemy itself, which must be destroyed."[6] Because, as Tiruvalluvar says: "The feelings of 'I' and 'mine' are nought but vanity and pride; he who crusheth them entereth a higher world than the world of the *devas*."[7]

Man must therefore correct his grammar, lest he should be rebuked as a fool. The wise man must delete 'I' and 'mine' and put instead He (God) and you (his fellow men). Man's love, eradicated of all egoism, must be centred in God and in His images. This will be real *svatyāga*, true abandonment and renunciation of oneself. "One must go out of oneself to get to God."[8] "When the self passes from the periphery of egoism to the divine centre, it sacrifices itself with a view to realizing itself."[9] This is the meaning of those words of Jesus Christ: "He that findeth his life, shall lose it; and he that shall lose his life for Me, shall find it."[10] Because "the more we get what we now call 'ourselves' out of the way and let Him take us over, the more truly ourselves we become."[11]

Accordingly, after knowing that all created things are valueless and transient (*anityam*) and God the only Svayambhū, the 'fish-eyed' man does not think any more of himself and of his

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[6] Thompson, *The Word of the Cross to the Hindus*, pp. 258–259.

[7] Tiruvalluvar, *Kural*, I, 35, 346. The world higher than the world of the *devas* (bright spirits) is the world of God Himself.

[8] Tissot, *The Interior Life*, p. 170.

[9] Srinivasachari, *A Synthetic View of Vedanta*, p. 38.

[10] *Matth.*, X, 39.

[11] Lewis, *Beyond Personality*, p. 63.

things; his only idea is the glory of God. *Ahankāra* is the greatest enemy of God's glory. Once the *ahambhāva* ('I-ness') and the *mamatva* (mineness) are destroyed, the tree of the glory of God grows powerful in the soul, and overshadows all her works.

"Glory", says Fr. McGarry, "is the inward personal dignity and majesty of a being; then, in an extended and second sense it is the outward manifestation of this inward dignity."[12] Accordingly a *ṛṣi* of old when explaining the dignity of *Bhūman*, the Fullness of Being, that is God, was interrogated by a *śiṣya*: "That Fullness, Sir—on what is it established?", and the *guru* replied: "On its own glory (*sve mahimni*)."[13] That is the reason why His name is said to be "great glory" (*mahad yaśaḥ*),[14] and that "He shines in His own glory."[15] For "God has in Himself, by Himself, and for Himself an infinite glory, infinitely worthy of Him; a glory which is His own, which is as great as Himself, which is His Life, which is Himself."[16] This glory is nothing else than the knowledge God has of Himself, a knowledge which is substantial and intrinsic, and therefore unchangeable, not different from his own nature.

Such glory was the essential end of all creation, for had He any other end He would have been moved by a being external to Him, which cannot be, because He is the Absolute. Therefore the glory of God is the primary and essential end of the whole creation. Certainly He was not in need of a creation to be happy; but He wanted to make others happy, by communicating His own knowledge to them.[17] This new accidental happiness of God is what is called his extrinsic glory, which is rendered by the creatures to the Creator. This glory He actually

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[12] McGarry, *Unto the End*, p. 46.

[13] *Cāndogya Upaniṣad*, VII, 24, 1.

[14] *Śvetāśvatara Upaniṣad*, IV, 9; *Mahānārāyaṇa Upaniṣad*, I, 10.

[15] Prabhavananda, *Srīmad Bhāgavatam*, II, 3, p. 19.

[16] Tissot, *op. cit.*, p. 56.

[17] Cf. Ramiere, *Les Espérances de l'Eglise*, pp. 12–17.

demands from us, to co-operate with Him towards the object of the creation; and His wish will be satisfied in two ways: first, by the acquisition of the knowledge of God which will lead man to his sanctification and final liberation; and secondly, by making God known to others. "The external glory rendered to God by creatures cannot properly be called a gain or advantage to God, precisely for the reason that it is not intended and demanded by God as an advantage He wishes to procure Himself, but rather as a means whereby He wishes to communicate and represent His perfection to rational creatures."[18] The essential glory of God is His own eternal happines, *saccidānanda.* What He wants therefore is to make all reasonable beings happy—ultimately as happy as Himself is—by communicating to them His own knowledge. His *Vāk,*[19] that is His Word, is His essential happiness (*bhōgyam*),[20] because it is his own uncreated reflection (*rūpam*).[21] By the creation of numberless new images of this *rūpam* (who thus becomes their *Hiraṇyagarbha,*[22] golden seed), God's knowledge becomes the natural inheritance of the human soul, that consequently receives from her model, the Word, both natural and supernatural light to know God always more and more, according to that statement of St. John: "Which enlighteneth every man that cometh into this world,"[23] just as a mirror receives the ray of light and of heat from the other concentric mirror. In a hymn of the *Ṛgveda* this very *Vāk* says: "On the world's summit I bring forth the Father,"[24] as if saying: The knowledge of the Father is generated in the minds of all men through me. "Without the light of the Word it would be impossible for man to realise fully the love designs of his heavenly Father. It is a light that the human intelligence

[18] Stufler, *Why God Created the World,* p. 70.

[19] *Ṛg.*, X, 129, 3; 125.

[20] *Śvetāśvatara Upaniṣad,* I, 12.

[21] *Bṛhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad,* I, 6, 1.

[22] *Ṛg.*, X, 121.

[23] *John,* I, 9.

[24] *Ṛg.*, X, 125, 7.

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finds in its uncontrollable aspiration towards the Infinite, the link of its philosophy and its faith."[25] This heavenly Light that the human intellect enjoys is already mentioned by the Upaniṣadic *ṛṣis*. One, for instance, says: "Now that Light which shines above this heaven, higher than all, higher than everything, in the highest world,[26] beyond which there are no other worlds—that is the same Light which is within man."[27] For, as St. Thomas explains, "the truths which are understood by the human mind rest upon an eternal foundation. Because they are founded upon the very first Truth, as on the universal cause which contains all truth."[28] Thus Kṛṣṇa is introduced saying: "Abiding in their souls, do I for pity's sake destroy with the brilliant lamp of knowledge their darkness born of ignorance."[29] Feeling the consciousness of this heavenly Light within himself the Assamese *bhakta* Śaṅkara-deva exclaimed: "Thou guidest, Oh Lord, the inner workings of my heart. In thee I am possessed of a Lord."[30] Which is briefly contained in this Marwari proverb: "God guides the blind."[31] All this divine Light which illumines the soul of man is nothing else than the light of the Word, which is "the true light,"[32] "the light of men."[33] "The one great power, that is as

[25] Valensin, *Aux Sources de la Vie Interieure*, I, p. 44.

[26] "The sun shines not there, nor the moon and stars; these lightnings shine not, much less this fire! After Him, as He shines, doth everything shine. This whole world is illumined with His light." (*Śvetāśvatara Upaniṣad*, VI, 14). "That is the knower of unity, the Eternal Real.........That is the Ocean of Light." (*Maitri Upaniṣad*, VI, 35.)

[27] *Cāndogya Upaniṣad*, III, 13, 7.

[28] St. Thomas Aquinas, *Summa contra Gentiles*, II, 84 "Certain Catholic Doctors (St. Thomas says) affirm with a show of reason (*satis probabiliter*) that it is God Himself who plans the part of the active intelligence in us, and they cite in support of their opinion the words of St. John concerning the Word." (Sertillanges, *The Foundations of Thomistic Philosophy*, p. 213)

[29] *Bhagavad Gītā*, X, 11.

[30] *Chaitanya to Vivekananda*, p. 53.

[31] Adams, *The Western Rajputana States*, p. 96.

[32] *John*, I, 9.

[33] *Ibid.*, 4.

it were guiding the whole course of evolution, leading nature on towards its goal, so to speak, is the light of the *Logos* [*Vāk*=the Word]."[34] "For God, who commended the light to shine out of darkness, hath shined in our hearts, to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God, in the face of Christ Jesus [the Word Incarnate]."[35]

A man endowed with 'fish-eyes' makes use of this light received from the Word, to see God everywhere, always thereby improving his knowledge of God and consequently glorifying Him in the whole creation. For "full of the glory of the Lord is his work,"[36] and in particular "the heavens show forth the glory of God,"[37] and "all the earth is full of His glory."[38] Dante also says it:

> "The glory of Him who moveth all
> Permeates the whole universe
> And is thereby reflected."[39]

Our Yāmuna also puts it most graphically: "This entire universe is nothing but a tiny droplet of the display and development of His might, yes, the drop of a drop from the ocean of the glory of the majesty of God,"[40] for "the limit to His glory neither the *devas* nor the *asuras* do know."[41]

But among all the works of the creation "the glory of God is living man;"[42] for all other creatures are the tacit reflections of that glory, while man must enrich his soul with its divine splendours. "Vain is our long life if we live not in the service of God."[43] "It is therefore necessary that, while enjoying the

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[34] Subba Row, *The Philosophy of the Bhagavad-Gītā*, p. 47.
[35] *II Cor.*, IV, 6.
[36] *Eccli.*, XLII, 16.
[37] *Ps.*, XVIII, 2.
[38] *Isai.*, VI, 3.
[39] Dante, *Paradiso*, I, 1–2.
[40] Yāmuna, cited by Otto, *India's Religion of Grace and Christianity*, pp. 41–42.
[41] *Śrīmad Bhāgavatam*, XII, 13, 1.
[42] St. Irenaeus, *Adversue Haereses*, IV, 20, 7 ; Migne, *P. G.*, VII, col. 1037.
[43] Prabhavananda, *op. cit.*, IV, 5, p. 60.

sight of those things that are beautiful, in their appearance we would praise and glorify their Maker."[44] Such were the prayers offered by Vasiṣṭha to God "through love of glory".[45]

This glory of God reflected in the soul of man works out an inner transformation of his soul according to the exigencies of her nature, every day making her more like to the brightness of the *rūpam* of which she is a further reflection. "The 'seed of glory' therefore cannot simply colour or tinge the soul outwardly, as gold-plating would outwardly gild a stone. It must penetrate and transform the whole soul, as a ray of light falling on a pure crystal would transform every atom of it into a shining pearl."[46] This inner transformation is explained by Dayānanda Saraswatī: "Glorification (of God) gives rise to love of the Supreme Being, reformation of one's nature, character and attributes, in accordance with the nature, attributes and character of God."[47]

No action of man must therefore be tinged with selfishness, all being done for the glory of the Lord. But you may say: Men do many worthy works, for which they are deservedly praised, that virtue praised may increase. It is so, but let the glory be to God, not to themselves, as it is written: "He that glorieth, let him glory in the Lord."[48] The 'fish-eyed' man does not derive any glory for himself and attributes everything to God. The glory of God is his only idea. Blessed Ramón Llull wrote of himself under the apellation of the Lover: "They asked the Lover where his Love first began. And he replied: 'It began in the glory of my Beloved'."[49] "Not to us, O Lord," said King

[44] Clement of Alexandria, *Paedagogus*, II, 8: Migne, *P. G.*, VIII, col. 479.

[45] *Rg.*, VII, 23, 1. Cf. second part of the *pāda*.

[46] Dandoy, "What is Catholicism?", *Light of the East*, I, No. 8, p. 4.

[47] Dayānanda Saraswatī, *Satyārth Prakāsh*, VII (Bharadwaja's ed., p. 209).

[48] *II Cor.*, X, 17. Cf. *I Cor.*, I, 31.

[49] Llull, *The Book of the Lover and the Beloved*, p. 35.

David, "not to us, but to Thy name give glory."[50] For "to God alone be honour and glory."[51] Consequently he strictly follows that advice of St. Paul: "Whether ye eat or drink or whatever else ye do, do all for the glory of God."[52] Thus the light that the life of the wise will diffuse among his neighbours will be a perpetual invitation to all to glorify God whose infinite perfections he portrays in his virtues. The man who so possesses 'fish-eyes' will make God known to others through his own life, according to that injunction of Jesus Christ: "So let your light shine before men that they may see your good works and glorify your Father who is in heaven;"[53] "just as it happens with the sun, which makes, through the diffusion of its rays, all bodies not only illumined, but also illumining."[54]

The men endowed with 'fish-eyes' will thus live a life of divine glory, glorifying God and making others glorify Him in their own life; a life in perfect unison with the life of God Himself, which is His own glory. One who knew the secrets of this life, could rightly exclaim in mingled joy and sorrow: "With my mind absorbed in the bliss of singing Thy glory, O Supreme Lord, I fear not the dreadful river of existence, difficult to cross; but I feel sorry for the pitiable condition of those perverted souls who labour under the dead weight of the world, tempted by the illusions of sensual enjoyment."[55] Their lives therefore are a perpetual song of glory, for they wish nothing else than the glory of God in themselves and in all others, than which there is no nobler aim in the whole creation. Their ideals, their ambitions, their purposes, their work, their life and their death have no other motto than "To the greater glory of God". Supreme, then, is the effect caused by the possession of 'fish-eyes'.

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[50] *Ps.*, CXIII, 1.
[51] *I Tim.*, I, 17.
[52] *I Cor.*, X, 31.
[53] *Math.*, V, 16.
[54] St. Thomas Aquinas, *De Veritate*, V, 8.
[55] *Śrīmad Bhāgavatam*, VII, 9, 43.

CONCLUSION

We have arrived at the threshold of man's reward, that is perfect liberation, the salvation of man, having begun our study from the mere possession of 'fish-eyes'. The acquisition of wisdom is for man the source of all his happiness. Wisdom will open to him the secrets of God and the true knowledge of the divine *līlā*, that is, the creation. This knowledge will dispel the dark clouds of *māyā* from his intellect and will place him beyond the sphere of *saṁsāric* influence. Knowledge finally will kindle the flame of the divine love in his heart, which will soon make him participant of the divine, just as the iron rod turns into fire, if put into the furnace. In this sense a Tamil proverb says: "To the learned there is nothing difficult."[1] The possession of 'fish-eyes' will thus lead man to cross the threshold of asceticism, by striving to imitate God, which imitation is the logical perfection of the human soul, and in particular by the complete detachment of the heart from all created things. Consequently a 'fish-eyed' man will be indifferent to anything pleasant or unpleasant, because all creatures are valueless apart from the will of God. Finally, the acquisition of this supreme wisdom will make man forget himself and direct all his works and all his life to the greater glory of God. From this earthly *mokṣa* the transit to the real *mokṣa* of *svarga* is but natural. Truly indeed could those early Proto-Indians pray: "Let the man who had fish-eyes, on dying live in happiness." Much later their successors wished the same end, expresssing it in different terms: "May our hearts be immersed in selfless love for the Lord."[2]

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[1] Lazarus, *A Dictionary of Tamil Proverbs*, No. 8638.

[2] *Śrīmad Bhāgavatam*, V, 18, 9.

The secret of this happiness and of this love cannot but be God Himself. "He who lives united to God dwells in the light, he who clings to this world lives in darkness;"[3] and man can never find happiness in darkness, for he was created for Eternal Light. Our efforts must be to escape the *māyā* produced by the world of *saṁsāra*, which will be obtained by our fixing our minds and hearts on the only fulcrum of steadiness in the universe which is God; which we shall not be able to do without the help of his *prasāda*. Hence, following the example of the Proto-Indians of old, and of the writer of the *Bhāgavatam*, we also must pray thus: "O God, who causest the mind of the faithful to be of one will, grant to Thy peoples to love that which Thou dost command and to desire that which Thou dost promise, that among the changes of the world our hearts may there be fixed, where true joys are."[4]

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[3] St. Albert the Great, *The Paradise of the Soul*, p. 24.

[4] *Missale Romanum*, Collect of the IV Sunday after Easter (Martindale, *The Prayers of the Missal*, I, The Sunday Collects, p. 51).

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